Please cite the Published Version

A Global Examination of LGBT Workplace Equality Indices[1]

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A Global Examination of LGBT Workplace Equality Indices

Around the world, the legal, social, and economic position of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT)[2] people is complex, with significant challenges as well as progress. At one extreme, some countries punish expressions of same-sex love and non-conforming gender identities with a death sentence, as even more countries sanction an LGBT person's sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) with jail time or significant fines (Badgett et al., 2019; IGLA World, 2019). Further, stigma driven by religious belief, political opportunism, debates around cultural values, patriarchal traditions and harmful gender norms, contributes to significant social exclusion of LGBT people (Pichler & Ruggs, 2018). Together, this often stymies an LGBT person's realization of their human rights, in addition to socially excluding them from education, services, markets, and public spaces, which ultimately limits their equality of opportunity to access employment and find socioeconomic security (Badgett et al., 2019; World Bank, 2018). Conversely, numerous countries contain various legal protections for LGBT people. For example, Australia, Canada, Mexico, South Africa, and the United Kingdom (U.K.) – among seventy other countries – have prohibited discrimination on the basis of SOGI (Catalyst, 2019). Same-sex marriage has been legalized in 29 countries and recognized in several others – in the Netherlands it has been legal for almost twenty years (Hollingsworth v. Perry, June 26, 2013; Pew Research Center, 2019). Further, according to many national and regional public opinion polls, acceptance of LGBT people is on the rise in many countries (Gallup, 2014; Flores, et al., 2018).

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[2] Although this acronym is context-specific and varies by country, the authors use this throughout the chapter since most of the source material and interviews predominantly focused on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Simultaneously, there is a growing impetus that the private sector should be socially conscientious and inclusive in their operations (Anteby & Anderson, 2014; Pichler & Ruggs, 2018). Corporations around the world are now expected to better engage socially excluded groups – including LGBT people. Often – and as explored throughout this chapter – this engagement is not based on governmental non-discrimination policies of compliance or incentives, but rather through voluntary partnerships that have been created between corporations and LGBT civil society organizations. One important method that has emerged regarding this new engagement is benchmarking in the form of workplace equality indices that track and promote corporate policies of diversity and inclusion – particularly the ground-breaking work of two LGBT civil society organizations, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) in the United States and Stonewall in the U.K., which has been modeled by others. The purpose of these various LGBT equality indices is to monitor inclusive policies and practices among corporate and other workplaces, and to promote changes in these policies and practices.

This chapter offers one of the first cross-national analyses of various LGBT workplace equality indices. Although there has been an increased interest in LGBT issues in corporations (e.g., Anteby & Anderson, 2014; Pichler & Ruggs, 2018), there seems to be a lack of research that systematically compares existing LGBT indices across countries. Tayar's (2017) article may be the current exemption as he critically applies institutional theory to uncover broadly applicable issues when ranking LGBT inclusion via such indices. Despite this, there is still no focused comparison of indices across differing national contexts. Therefore, interested parties are potentially missing out on key patterns, trends, emerging best practices, and common challenges for organizations that undertake this work. As domestic corporations and multinational corporations (MNCs) become more engaged on the rights and inclusion of LGBT people (Anteby

& Anderson, 2014; Pichler & Ruggs, 2018), these indices are empowering increasing numbers of corporations to act and thus are important tools worthy of examination. This chapter seeks to do just that, by first providing an overview and in-depth analysis of each index, to then compare and contrast each benchmarking tool in an attempt to understand patterns – specifically strengths, weaknesses, and common challenges. Given the differences between countries on LGBT issues, as well as the rapid change of pace on these complex issues, such a comparison is timely and important.

METHODOLOGY

We identified more than a dozen workplace equality indices that exist around the world, and from that, focused on a sample of five indices in order to provide regional diversity. In chronological order by the first dissemination of each index, our examination included the HRC's Corporate Equality Index (CEI - U.S.), Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index (WEI - U.K.), Fulcrum's Ukrainian Corporate Equality Index (CEI - Ukraine), the Forum's South African Workplace Equality Index (SAWEI - South Africa), and *Presente's* Diversity and Equality Diagnostic (*Empresas Presente: Diagnóstico de Diversidad y Equidad* - Peru)[3]. We then undertook a review of all publically available information about the five indices, including any information on their indicators, methodology, rankings, and corporate participation. A topic guide was then created to facilitate semi-structured interviews with key informants in those five civil society organizations, to specifically capture each index's: origin and history; methodology utilized to approach corporations and collect data; additional applications; strengths and weaknesses; and future directions for the index. In this, we especially focused on the overall reason for its being, challenges, potential impact, and indicators. This chapter is a synthesis and

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[3] Since the indices in South Africa and Peru were disseminated in the same year, we have listed chronologically by the establishment of its organization – in this case first was South Africa's the Forum.

comparison of material gathered from the literature review and from the key informant interviews. We focus our attention toward private corporations that submitted themselves to be evaluated in the index, yet we acknowledge that a number of public and third sector organizations also participate in some of the indices, particularly in Stonewall's WEI. Therefore, we use the label "participating organizations" for sake of parity.

COUNTRIES OF FOCUS

Given the diversity of experiences of LGBT people in these five countries, this section provides a brief review of the legal and socioeconomic context[4]. Nonetheless, we reflect on the complexity of laws and policies, stigma, and economic exclusion that LGBT people face in these countries of focus to situate civil society-led indices on the private sector as an important component within wider efforts to promote socioeconomic inclusion.

Laws and policies are important indicators of the situation for LGBT people and, while at one point each country criminalized aspects of LGBT experiences, it is now neither illegal to be an LGBT person nor illegal to act on same-sex desires or non-conforming expressions of gender. For example, the 1996 Constitution of South Africa showed tremendous foresight by being the first constitution in the world to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation as well as discrimination based on race and gender, although not explicitly inclusive of outlawing discrimination based on gender identity or expression. Furthermore, South Africa's Employment Equity Act of 1998, and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 1997, the Labour Relations Act 1998, and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act of 2000 all ensure that employees have the right to fair and equitable treatment and not be unfairly

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[4] For a more in-depth examination, we recommend viewing the Global Index on Legal Recognition on Homosexual Orientation and the Transgender Rights Index, as well as resources from the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex Association (ILGA) and Transgender Europe (TGEU).

discriminated against on the basis of race, gender, or sexual orientation (The South African

LGBT+ Management Forum, ILGA, 2019). Likewise, discrimination during employment and

when accessing goods and services based on sexual orientation is prohibited in the U.K. and

Peru, but only partly in Ukraine and the U.S. (ILGA, 2019). In the U.S., the sociopolitical

landscape for LGBT people depends on state law and practices within municipalities (e.g.,

Pichler & Rugss, 2018; Ragins, 2001). At the national level, while there are no federal

employment protections for LGBT workers (Pichler & Ruggs, 2018), gay marriage was recently

legalized by the U.S. Supreme Court (Hollingsworth v. Perry, June 26, 2013).

In relation to gender identity and expression, almost all of the countries of focus allow a

legal change of name and gender marker on state IDs – except for Peru, which allows neither.

All five countries of focus only partially seek to legally protect transgender people, with

insufficient protections to ensure against discrimination, state-sponsored prosecution, and hate

crimes (TGEU, 2014).

One of the major drivers for low levels of socioeconomic inclusion and workplace

inclusion of LGBT people is social stigma. Stigma can be defined as shame or dishonor

associated with a particular circumstance or personal characteristic. The World Bank writes that

stigmatizing attitudes "…are a barometer of people's potential behavior...they can determine

how society treats these groups, how these groups engage with society, and how the policies that

aim to improve their status are implemented" (Das, 2013). Often diversity of SOGI is seen as a

challenge to deeply entrenched gender norms and a violation of established social mores. The

pathologization of non-conforming SOGI as well as the scapegoating of LGBT people have been

used to serve political agendas.

Public attitudes toward LGBT people are rapidly changing in these countries of focus –

for the better as well as for the worse. For example, in South Africa a 2016 survey found that

67% of respondents indicated that would "strongly like," "somewhat like" or "not care" if they

lived next to a neighbor with same-sex attractions (Afrobarometer, 2016). In Ukraine, geopolitics

between two external powers heavily influence public opinion. To the west, the European Union

specifically incentivizes government policies to protect the rights of LGBT people. To the east,

Russia actively criminalizes LGBT people and commits human rights abuses, including murder

enacted by state and non-state actors in Chechnya and elsewhere. Paradoxically, in the U.S.,

while public opinion about same sex relationships has rapidly improved, President Trump's

policies have further stigmatized transgender Americans. In the U.K., about half of the

population felt that gay marriage should be legal in 2005, whilst in 2019 73% of the population

endorsed same-sex marriage which became law throughout most of the U.K. in 2013.

Nevertheless, there are regional differences including less social acceptance in Northern Ireland

(The Rainbow Project, 2009), which only aligned their law this year to allow same-sex couples

to marry (Coulter, 2020). Even with greater social acceptance toward same-sex relationships in

the U.K., transgender people experience high rates of verbal and physical abuse (GEO, 2018;

Stonewall, 2018; GEO).

Stigma can have a deleterious impact on an LGBT person's well-being, including a lower

socioeconomic status and far-reaching workplace challenges. In the U.S., new research

presenting data from almost 24,000 LGBT respondents in 35 states shows that LGBT people

have a higher poverty rate when compared to heterosexual, cisgender people, and that poverty is

further entrenched by race and gender (Badgett, 2019). In South Africa, these intersectional

vulnerabilities are similar and have significant socioeconomic impacts, wherein LGBT people

continue to face workplace stigma and discrimination, including "widespread discomfort—if not outright hostility—on the part of fellow employees and employers" (The Other Foundation, 2019). In Peru, stigma has the significant effect of people concealing their SOGI to the extent they can, out of fear of losing their jobs or being subject to harassment. One government-led diagnostic with 8,630 LGBT respondents found that more than one in five had experienced discrimination or harassment in the workplace, with specifically 17.4% reporting that behavior came directly from bosses or coworkers (INEI, 2017).

Pioneering research has demonstrated the negative impact of violence, exclusion in the labor market, and the lower socioeconomic status of LGBT people on a society's macroeconomic growth (Badgett, 2019), and human development outcomes (Badgett, 2014). These civil society-led workplace equality indices are one "piece of the puzzle" to help advance the socioeconomic inclusion of LGBT people. Nevertheless, their influence should not be underestimated and the rest of this chapter shows that they provide important data in these countries of focus and now serve as a useful tool for comparison.

EXAMINATION OF INDICES

United States: The Human Rights Campaign's (HRC) Corporate Equality Index (CEI)

Origin and History

The Human Rights Campaign is a U.S.-based nonprofit human rights organization focused on the LGBT population (Human Rights Campaign, 2019). The HRC is the largest LGBT civil rights organization in the United States, with more than 3 million members, which was founded in 1980 as one of the first LGBT political action committees in the country. The organization has moved beyond lobbying, and currently serves a variety of functions including,

for instance, conducting primary research and developing policy reports and community involvement (see HRC.org).

The HRC initiated the CEI in 2002, and is thus the longest running index examined in this chapter. The purpose of the index is to serve as "a road map to corporate diversity leaders to help them stay on top of the evolving field of policies and practices for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer workers" (CEI, Criteria Change). The CEI grew out of survey work that was done by the Equality Project in the early 1990's (National Center for Lesbian Rights, 2019), which created a set of equality principles for work organizations, which became the foundation for the CEI.

Methodology

The HRC surveys Fortune 1000 companies, companies included on Forbes' list of the 200 largest privately held employers, and any other firm with 500+ employees that requested a rating for which the HRC had adequate information to make such a rating (e.g., CEI, 2005). The CEI is based on several guiding principles that have been consistent from inception, namely that the index is: rigorous and fair; transparent, objective and comparable; consistent and reliable. The CEI is meant to be transparent and objective in that scores are readily quantifiable and inclusive of employer's policies and practices not only in the U.S., but globally. The measure is intended to be consistent and reliable such that scores can be compared across years and the HRC provides employers with at least 12 months' notice if the index is going to change (CEI, Criteria Change). A key feature of the CEI is that it allows for measurable change in policy and practice as well as the impact of these. The CEI is "laser focused" on changes in LGBT-supportive policies and practices in corporate America, and is designed to not only monitor these changes, but also to spur these changes.

The first iteration of the CEI involved seven criteria "Criteria 1.0", namely non-discrimination policies based on SOGI, health insurance for domestic partners, official recognition of an LGBT resource group, LGBT inclusive diversity training, engagement in appropriate advertising to the queer community, and no engagement in activity that would undermine equal rights for the LGBT community, all of which were equally weighted (CEI 1.0). These criteria have changed over time. The second iteration of the CEI criteria, Criteria 2.0, was established in 2004. These criteria were the same as the first iteration, but weighted domestic partner benefits more heavily; these criteria remained in effect to 2010. The next iteration (Criteria 3.0), implemented from 2009 to 2011, included a comprehensive requirement for domestic partner benefits, transgender-inclusive benefits, as well as organizational competency in and external engagement with the LGBT community. The fourth and current version of the CEI criteria (Criteria 4.0) were implemented in 2013, which required additional criteria for businesses to receive a perfect score, namely SOGI non-discrimination policies included in all operations globally, a requirement that U.S. contractors comply with all of the firm's non-discrimination policies, and a prohibition of philanthropic diving to non-religious organizations that have a written policy of discrimination based on SOGI. Although the building blocks of the CEI have not altered, modifications to specific criteria are meant to drive incremental change in organizational policy.

Applications

One outcome of the CEI is the annual report, the overall purpose of which is to evaluate the equality of Fortune-ranked companies for LGBT employees (CEI, 2019). Another outcome of the CEI is the "Best Places to Work" list, i.e., employers with a score of 100% on the CEI for a given year. The HRC "Buying for Equality Guide" is a list of consumer-related employers with

ratings of green (highest CEI scores), yellow (businesses that have made inroads on the CEI), or red (lowest CEI score) to help provide consumers with information about which businesses support LGBT workplace equality. All that said, the real goal of the CEI is to create organizational policy change. As an example, the CEI has had an impact on organization adoption of certain practices, such as domestic partner benefits and benefits for transgender staff.

The CEI has also been used as a key variable in a variety of academic papers – for example, as a measure of firms' LGBT supportiveness. Most often, the CEI is used as a predictor of firm performance in terms of, for instance, stock market reactions (Wang & Schwarz, 2010), stock returns, and market valuation (Johnston & Malina, 2008).

United Kingdom: Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index (WEI)

Origin and History

Stonewall was founded in 1989 by a group in response to a 1988 U.K. act that sought to bar local governments from the "promotion of homosexuality". Successfully challenging this law, the group went on to campaign against the stigmatization of lesbian, gay, and bisexual people. It became a registered charity in 2003 and is now one of the most well-known LGBT campaigning organizations in the U.K. and has been successful in lobbying the U.K. government on issues such as equalization of age consent and same-sex marriage. It has also developed itself from being focused almost exclusively on gay rights to a broader remit charity focused on protecting and empowering all LGBT people – including trans people. One of its core achievements has been in the area of workplace protections whereby it was pivotal in strengthening provisions for LGBT people in the Employment Equality Regulations (2003/2007) and the Equality Act (2010). Alongside these achievements, Stonewall also recognized the need to engage with employers in order to embed concrete actions that would help initiate

transformative change. Therefore, it set out to establish the Workplace Equality Index (WEI) as well as corporate-focused training and leadership programs in the mid-2000s. The first annual WEI was designed and conducted in 2005, and it is now (2019/20) in its 16th cycle with over 500 organizations from a wide range of sectors in the U.K. taking part. Although participating in the index does not incur a cost to an organization, those registering to submit to the index are encouraged to pay a fee to become members of the "Diversity Champions": program in order to gain access to a wide range of guidance, support, and networking opportunities. Stonewall's WEI is now well-established and has a strong brand and reputation within the U.K. context whereby it generates significant publicity and awareness.

Methodology

Participating organizations complete a structured and systematic process of gathering and presenting evidence that cover 10 core topics: 1) LGBT specific policies, 2) the employee lifecycle, 3) LGBT specific network/resource group, 4) allies/role models, 5) senior leadership, 6) data monitoring, 7) procurement/supply chain, 8) community/external engagement, 9) clients/service users/customers, and 10) accreditations and industry awards. Each of the topics have a range of questions that focus on the extent to which the organization is providing protections, representation, and voice to their LGBT employees. Emphasis is given to topics 1 to 5 related to the working environment as well as topics 8, community engagement, and 9, customers/service delivery. It is worth noting that the WEI was originally focused on sexual orientation and it was not until 2015 that it started to include specific questions and elements focusing on trans and non-binary identities. In order to score highly, organizations must provide robust evidence on "what they have done". Although the philosophy is "do a little bit of everything", some overall highly ranked organizations may have very low scores in a small

number of sections, yet demonstrate exceptional practice in key areas that mean that they benchmark well. However, they do have to demonstrate a certain threshold of acceptable practice, particularly with regards to trans inclusion (as this tends to be less well covered within traditional diversity and inclusion practice). Therefore, organizations must think carefully about how to best present evidence and how to allocate sufficient resources into the evidence gathering process. In addition, there is an employee survey that provides a broad "litmus test" of the evidence provided by the organization, and is distributed by the organization to the whole of their workforce (over 110,000 responses across the 500+ organizations were provided in the latest cycle).

Submissions and surveys are completed via an online portal, whereby an internal team of assessors are trained before each year's intake. Each application is initially assessed against a standardized marking framework (a total of 200 marks awarded – 180 from organization's submission and 20 from responses to employee survey) whereby each question set within the submission application can carry between 0.5 and 4 marks depending on specificity, scope, and significance of the element being assessed. Although there is no formal weighting of the 10 topic sections, the topics do vary in number of marks as some cover a broader range of elements. Once initially assessed, the top 150 ranked applications typically get second marked to ensure accuracy and to identify any major discrepancies or anomalies. A final ranking of applications is completed and the "Top 100" echelon is designated. Each participating organization is provided with a breakdown of their score across the 10 topics plus their overall and sector-specific ranking. However, those organizations that pay to be members of Stonewall's "Diversity Champion" program also receive written feedback for each topic and an appointment with Stonewall to discuss the development of an action plan.

The "Top 100 Employers" are listed publicly via online and press statements early in the following year. Those not in the "Top 100" do not get publicly announced, but they might acknowledge their involvement (and ranking) via their own means. Moreover, there are benchmarking lists by sector (such as private or public) and for trans specific inclusivity in order to provide further insight to participating organizations, as well as awards that celebrate specific core elements of the index, such as employee network group of the year and bi-inclusive workplace of the year. The ideology behind the "Top 100" system is to incentivize and reward "best practice" employers, and to prevent a "naming and shaming" culture, whereby those that fall outside of the "Top 100" are aspiring to be best practice employers. This sustains an interest across a wide range of sectors and encourages organizations to continually progress. However, as participation in the index has grown significantly over the last few years, the probability of getting into the "Top 100" has become much lower, which has started to become a demotivating factor for some organizations. Consequently, Stonewall is looking into additional ways of incentivizing and rewarding those that do not make the "Top 100".

Applications

Outside of the main assessment process and publicity of the annual "Top 100" lists and awards, there is limited wider utilization of the data for other applications. Despite this, Stonewall uses the data to generate best practice resources and guidance, and it does conduct its own additional primary research activities that are written for wider public interest and dissemination, such as its 2018 "LGBT in Britain – Work Report" that outlines key analyses and findings from a national survey of over 3,000 LGBT employees. Moreover, Stonewall does help to facilitate sector-specific "knowledge sharing" networks with organizations who have

participated in the WEI in order to further apply and embed best practices emerging from leading organizations.

Ukraine: Fulcrum's Ukrainian Corporate Equality Index

Origin and History

Established in 2009, the All-Ukrainian Charitable Organization (Fulcrum)[5] works on behalf of LGBT people to provide equal opportunities, by creating bridges to the general population, public service providers, and employers – including those in the private sector. Due to prevalent societal stigma, engaging corporations is important because so many LGBT staff are afraid of coming out, in addition to an overall corporate hesitation to address SOGI in the workplace. In 2012, Fulcrum started a multi-year process to launch the index, often by adapting international practices to their own context (particularly helpful were the HRC and Stonewall, who provided expertise and guidance). One adaptation includes that, in light of prevalent stigma, they believed that only focusing on SOGI would alarm corporations and limit their participation – whether out of fear or antipathy. In an effort to make it more palatable to the private sector, Fulcrum discussed with the Anti-Discrimination Coalition[6] in 2015 how to broaden the scope to include other marginalized groups – thus parting from international indices. From this emerged a partnership with five implementing partners[7], which led to an index that examines SOGI, disability status, and gender equality. Through this larger scope, Fulcrum and others were able to create more robust indicators to cover the breadth of non-discrimination against marginalized groups, in addition to providing subtle entry points to introduce SOGI benchmarking. Even with

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[5] Available: https://t-o.org.ua/en/about

[6] Comprised of dozens of organization working on various social issues – gender equality, Roma inclusion, etc.

[7] NGO Women's Consortium of Ukraine, the NGO National Assembly of People with Disabilities of Ukraine, with support from the Coalition for Combatting Discrimination, the International Renaissance Foundation, as well as informational support from the LIGA: ZAKON (corporation). For more, see: 2016 report.

a rise in corporate progress across each social dimension each year, the index has been on hiatus since 2017 (with the intention to re-launch), due to a lack of sustainable funds.

Methodology

To make the indicators as pertinent as possible to the Ukrainian context, Fulcrum mapped them to national legislation as well as to E.U. labor and human rights standards (for SOGI, disability, and gender). The indicators on SOGI include: does a corporation have anti-discriminations policies which specifically include SOGI, are there barriers for transgender applicants to be considered for work, are there services provided toward training staff on SOGI, are LGBT people included in marketing strategies, is there support given to events which focus on the LGBT community, and is there an official public position on LGBT issues. For each demographic group, there are 6-8 indicators which each tally to 100 points. If a corporation scores more than 50 points over each grouping, they have the choice to be published online, be included in a "Best Place for Work" publication, and be included in the print publication. For those who score less, they have the option to remain off the final output altogether.

Fulcrum utilized many strategies to increase the participation of corporations, primarily by avoiding "naming and shaming" tactics and rather creating incentives and flexibility to voluntarily do better. By couching the index within an overall process to provide free trainings and recommendations, Fulcrum was able to secure even more participation from the private sector. But again, there was a disparity between MNCs and domestic corporations – namely, it was mostly MNCs that consistently took part in the index and also scored higher. Typically, these more "advanced" MNCs often had SOGI-inclusive policies derived from their headquarters in the U.S. or Western Europe. Inversely, Ukrainian corporations were significantly less interested to take part, and were sometimes outwardly homophobic/transphobic when

approached. Additionally, domestic corporations tended to have little awareness of non-discrimination or national and regional policies that prohibited discrimination. Fulcrum's index provided little incentives for domestic corporations to take part.

Applications

Although the index is now on hiatus, it did have some applications that were useful to participating corporations, such as increased visibility, and for developing societal dialogue on LGBT inclusion alongside other equality agendas such that it was able to show the similarity of each issue (LGBT, disability, gender) thereby assuaging corporate concerns of "special attention" to a cultural taboo. Inversely, however, the index did not necessarily translate into governmental policy change. For example, although Fulcrum was invited by some Ministers to provide recommendations to an emerging non-discrimination policy, their recommendations on SOGI were all excluded. By comparison, their recommendations on gender and disability issues were included.

South Africa: The Forum's South African Workplace Equality Index (SAWEI)

Origin and History

The South African Workplace Equality Index (SAWEI) is the first LGBT employment index throughout the Middle East and Africa (MEA) regions. It was piloted in 2018 and is the flagship project of the South African LGBT+ Management Forum (the Forum), a registered non-profit organization formed in 2015. The Forum provides free resources and support for company leadership and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other (LGBT+) employee network groups operating in South Africa. The approach to the SAWEI has been shaped by a wide range of existing indices, particularly Stonewall's WEI and the HRC's CEI, yet the genesis of the SAWEI is different to some of these other initiatives given that the Forum is not a campaigning group

and the legal context for LGBT people is distinctly progressive in South Africa, particularly

compared with the majority of African nations. Several pieces of legislation aim to ensure that

employees in South Africa enjoy the right to fair and equitable treatment. Whilst companies are

legally obligated to track statistics relating to race, gender, and disability, and to also develop

explicit plans for reaching certain targets, no such measure exists for LGBT people. The SAWEI

is a tool that fills a gap by helping companies measure their progress in ensuring their workplace

is free from discrimination and harassment and determines if they are actively creating a more

inclusive and LGBT friendly working environment in the absence of any hard measures for

LGBT inclusion as provided by the law.

Methodology

The SAWEI is based on a 6-dimension framework: 3 dimensions that consider the

structures of an organization (processes, policies, support) and 3 dimensions that reflect on

behaviors of an organization that ground those "top-down" initiatives (awareness and sensitivity,

diverse and inclusive thought - including intersectional perspectives and visibility). There are

certain similarities between the SAWEI and Stonewall's WEI, as discussions between Stonewall

and the Forum have led to the recycling of several of WEI questions. One of the Forum's

Directors indicated that this enhanced SAWEI's credibility by utilizing "tried and tested

questions". However, unlike Stonewall's WEI, the SAWEI methodology does not yet include an

employee survey and thus does not provide direct insight into employee experiences.

The SAWEI sets out 12 questions in 6 sections and is intended to be completed by one

person in a participating company, and no fees are involved. Detailed guidance notes provide

clear directions to navigate the process and include a list of key definitions related to LGBT

people derived from the HRC's documents. Most questions are asked in a multiple-choice format

and the respondent is asked to select the option that best applies and for which they can provide evidence. Respondents within multinational companies are asked to provide answers and evidence related to their South African operations. For the pilot in 2018, respondents were required to upload supporting evidence in a single standalone document at the end once all questions were completed. In 2019, the entire submission process was digitized, which also allowed for evidence upload per question.

The pilot scores were generated by collating points earned per section with 46 points available and 4 potential bonus points, and this was expanded in 2019 to 63 points and 5 potential bonus points. The results are reviewed by independent moderators and audited by an independent advisory panel comprised of individuals with relevant expertise. The participating organizations are ranked into three tiers - Gold, Silver, and Bronze - reflecting three levels of demonstrable best practice, and these rankings are publicly reported. Any company that scores below the minimum threshold for bronze are not tiered, and also do not appear in the public report. Maintaining anonymity for those that are not yet tiered is important to the Forum, given that the process is still being established and is hoped to encourage progress. The SAWEI pilot in 2018 involved a relatively small number of participating organizations (17 in total), where nearly two third were professional or legal services firms. MNCs were heavily represented in the pilot, wherein 10 of the 14 top tiered companies are South African operations of international firms. By the second year there was a greater mix introducing participation from mining, manufacturing, and retail sectors including some wholly domestic companies, out of 27 participating organizations.

Applications

The results are reflected in a full report[8] which includes recommendations that participating companies and other workplaces can reflect on to improve on their practices toward becoming more LGBT inclusive. Company-specific tailored reports are prepared which guide follow-up discussions between Forum Steering Committee and participating companies to help provide them with insight into their performance. Currently the Forum does not offer consulting services to help companies undertake new measures to improve LGBT inclusion. Because the SAWEI is very new and is labor-intensive for the volunteer-run Forum team, further analysis of the data collected has been limited. It is hoped that over the next few years there will be a good time series that will provide analysis about the trajectory for companies and whether they have been informed by previous scores to achieve greater workplace equality for LGBT people.

Peru: *Presente's* Diversity and Equality Diagnostic *(Empresas Presente: Diagnóstico de Diversidad y Equidad)*

Origin and History

Presente is an organization that works on behalf of the human rights of LGBT[9] people, with a focus on labor and empowerment through the implementation of policies in the workplace as well as through promoting a cultural shift toward respecting diversity (*Presente, Quines Somos; Presente, Qué Hacemos)*. Due to a significant void regarding corporate SOGI-inclusive labor policies, as well as ambivalence among corporations to even discuss the issues, *Presente* created their index as a way to galvanize private sector support. Launched in 2018, the index was informed by many international best practices[10] - including the HRC's index – but adapted to the

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[8] The South African Workplace Equality Index 2018 Full Results Report found at
http://lgbtforum.org/resources
[9] *Presente* formally uses the "LGBTIQ" acronym (to include intersex and queer people), but since most indicators and conversations only focused on SOGI, the authors continue to use the LGBT acronym.
[10] In addition to the HRC, this also included a Chilean LGBT organization, *Iguales*, in addition to applying standards from the International Labour Organization.

Peruvian context. For example, the source materials they drew from were quite established and many years into their creation, as well as built around national or international laws and norms. Particularly in absence to similar policies in Peru, *Presente* created an index that examines voluntary corporate policies, as opposed to those driven by the state, and provided a questionnaire that was less time-consuming and perhaps more likely to be filled out in its inaugural year. Since the launch, they have used the index as part of a larger strategy to create and deliver tailor-made toolkits and trainings to corporations on SOGI issues, with the idea to charge for this follow-up work in subsequent years. Although the index is envisioned to always remain free, the idea to monetize follow-up materials and trainings is under consideration due to a lack of financial resources. In fact, the index is almost exclusively financed by international grants, since *Presente* has had little success when engaging domestic sources of funding. But even with this challenge, *Presente* believes that their index has contributed toward a paradigm shift on what is considered "diversity" in the workplace, since there is now a growing corporate recognition of SOGI polices as well as the benefits that open LGBT staff bring to a business.

Methodology

Before its launch, *Presente* conducted consultations with the LGBT community and some private sector representatives to develop indicators that were pertinent to their needs, as well as to ensure that two communities who historically did not connect could begin to understand each other. Aside from basic demographic questions to understand the size of the corporation and its sector, the questionnaire also asks about the diversity and inclusion policies within the corporation, if there is an internal resource group for LGBT staff, what are the norms or policies to prohibit discrimination or harassment and if those reports are meaningfully counted, is there a public commitment to diversity and inclusion, and if the corporation actively recruits and

promotes talented LGBT applicants and staff. In total, there are 32 questions formulated using a mixture of binary yes/no, yes/no/in progress, and open-ended questions to determine the breadth of policies as well as their depth throughout corporate operations. Once the survey tool was complete, and to advance past corporate ambivalence to discuss SOGI issues, they worked with a talent and human management consulting company, SOOM[11], who had preexisting relationships with many corporations.

After its launch year, *Presente* cultivated the participation of 74 corporations, with 22 of them having signed a pledge to implement recommendations. From this, *Presente* gave workshops and trainings to some of the participants, often by approaching SOGI issues through an intersectional lens and discussing the overlap between gender, race, and disability status. But this engagement has not been uniform across MNCs and domestic corporations – to the contrary, there is often a dichotomy between both types of businesses. For example, it was mostly Canadian and American MNCs who participated, each with their own inclusion policies from headquarters. This gave *Presente* an ideal entry point, since they often found an appetite among staff to implement SOGI policies that were pertinent to the Peruvian context. Conversely, domestic corporations were significantly more ambivalent, and even antagonistic, when *Presente* approached them – some even talking about LGBT people as a "threat". For this latter group, the index thus offered little incentive for their participation.

Applications

Given that the index is only in its second year, its applications are not readily apparent. However, there has been one clear application for *Presente*. In final reporting, they do not rank each corporation according to their final scores, but rather classify them as "Beginner" vs.

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[11] Available at: https://soompersonas.com/

"Inspirer" (the latter being more advanced and thus able to inspire those less advanced). Their strategy is to create a positive relationship with corporations in which they do not feel alienated, but rather inspired to do more. Presente believes this has led to positive relationships between their organization and corporations, building toward a more meaningful engagement. One apparent example is how *Presente* uses the findings of the index to create tailor-made toolkits and trainings for corporations, which have already informed pertinent changes in corporate policy. For example, one corporation recently created an LGBT employee resource group.

COMPARISON OF THE INDICES

This section compares the indices, in terms of strengths and weaknesses, across the following areas: (i) content of the index, (ii) approach to assessment and validation, (iii) ranking, benchmarking, and reward systems, (iv) reach and scope of participation, and (v) extent of transparency and wider applications. A summary of our findings is presented in Table 1. We discuss our findings in more detail in the following section.

Insert Table 1 Here

Content of the Index

Many of the indices cover ample breadth and depth of content that focuses on the immediate internal working environment as well as on wider aspects of business operations, such as customer relationships, supply chain management systems, and community engagement practices. It is interesting, and important, that the more established indices, particularly Stonewall's WEI, are focusing on the wider landscape of LGBT inclusion within the employment context given most participating organizations operate within global, or at least

multinational, customer and supply systems. However, there remains an issue that much of the content is generally more applicable to larger organizations with dedicated (and well-resourced) human resource management functions. Moreover, there is a challenge in maintaining the unique identity of the indices as those specifically advocating LGBT inclusion. This is even more of a challenge in certain countries, such as Ukraine and Peru, where there is a lack of support from national governments, and antagonism from the domestic business community, for advancing LGBT rights and protections. In these contexts, there has been effort to present the index within a broader equality agenda that also represents other minority groups, such as women and persons with disabilities. In some senses, this may present opportunities to embed a more intersectional perspective, or to gain legitimacy through connecting with global human rights or social inclusion agendas. Through whichever route legitimatization is being sought, a consistent pattern has emerged to show how new indices are adopting best practices from the more established indices in the U.S. and the U.K. However, it is important that the content is adapted to fit the specific cultural and socio-political context, and that the local LGBT community is consulted and involved in that process.

Other strengths emerge when comparing the content of the questions asked within each index, although a more in-depth analysis of this content is contingent upon a deeper dive into the index's impact in each country of focus. Nonetheless, each index succeeds in asking questions regarding both sexual orientation and gender identity, thus providing a balance across the community and not shying away from the inclusion of gender identity issues. Although not uniform across every index, most of the themes include in-depth examinations of policies and norms within the workplace, including: fair hiring practices (to combat labor market discrimination), the creation of employee resource groups for LGBT staff (to provide visibility

and a voice of advocacy), and trainings of staff (to promote sensitivity). Additionally, with the exclusion of the Forum in South Africa, the rest of the indices ask about corporate policies in the public sphere, which might provide an expectation that to reach a perfect score, corporations must examine their role of responsibility or as "agents of change" within its community.

Approach to Assessment and Validation

All of the indices implement a systematic process of gathering and reviewing evidence from the participating organizations. The process is similar across the indices: participating organizations are asked to provide written responses to a range of standardized questions that aim to elicit detailed evidence-based information, and these responses are then assessed against a set of criteria (or guiding principles) by an expert panel (or trained reviewers) who allocate a range of marks based on these judgments. However, the level of rigor and extent of administrative resources needed to carry out the assessment and validation process varies between the indices. For the more established indices, several hundred applications are submitted and so a much more resource-heavy process is needed, and a stronger validation process is required, to ensure fairness and rigor in differentiating between participating organizations. Stonewall's WEI is perhaps the most labor intensive for all parties involved, yet its process of assessment and validation is very rigorous (e.g. employee surveys are conducted and results triangulated with evidence submitted by the participating organization) and is a cornerstone of its brand reputation. Another aspect that varies is the level of transparency and guidance provided to participating organizations regarding the assessment criteria. Although all offer some level of guidance or training, there are differences in the extent to which these are used as incentives to encourage participating organizations to create and implement action plans in a systematic way. For the newer indices, there has been more effort to use training (post-assessment) as a way to

encourage participation and buy-in, given there has been challenges in engaging with domestic

organizations. For the HRC, providing up-front guidance before assessment is an important part

of their transparency principle, yet they do not tend to offer specialist training post-assessment,

unlike Stonewall who offers a comprehensive remit of guidance and support as part of their

commercialized fee-paying "Diversity Champions" program.

Ranking, Benchmarking, and Reward Systems

Across each organization, the indices were structured to create a system of incentives for

corporations to want to participate and then willingly adopt policies that promote a higher score

in subsequent years. In fact, in almost every key informant interview, participants spoke of the

need to avoid "naming and shaming" tactics, thus galvanizing corporate support through

incentives. Within this approach, each organization has chosen a somewhat different method for

public listings (see Table 2). Each divergence in the ranking system carries its own dynamics

between the organization, corporations, and other stakeholders – sometimes translating into

challenges. For example, the HRC's CEI has an increasingly high-ranking echelon of

participating corporations; in 2019, 572 corporations received a perfect score, which was well

over half of all participants. In some ways, this sets a low standard for perfection, which could

lead to corporate complacency toward adopting even better policies or to address concerns not

currently captured by the index's indicators. Stonewall's WEI takes a different approach, by

adopting very strict indicators and a time-intensive standard of documenting proof of policies

and workplace culture, in tandem with a limited public list of the "Top 100". In some cases, this

can cultivate competition to adopt the best policies, whereas other times this can discourage

participation[12]. Finally, for ranking systems that do not list lower-performing corporations, this

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[12] As an example, see: https://westbridgfordwire.com/notts-police-to-stop-participating-in-stonewall-workplace-equality-index/

limits knowledge of the entire population of participants, which is pertinent for the LGBT community who might seek employment with those employers.

Insert Table 2 Here

Also built in to this system are rewards. In Ukraine, the U.K., and the U.S., the indices provide follow-up rewards by including higher ranked corporations in public "Best Places to Work" lists, thematic awards that focus on advancements for a particular demographic within the LGBT community, or buying guides catered to LGBT consumers. This has given significant visibility to corporations, particularly for the emerging base of LGBT and allied consumers. Across the indices, there is an underlying logic of a strong economic business case for the inclusion of LGBT people in the workplace as well as in the market. Rewarding best practice is viewed as developing a longer-term trust and relationship that leads to a sustainable, yet gradual cultural transformation of the corporation, in addition to incentivizing investment into actions that may lead to competitive advantage for that corporation. As Stonewall described in its approach to rewarding participation, they are facilitating both "collaboration and competition".

Reach and Scope of Participation

While the HRC and Stonewall have cultivated a significant and rising base of participating organizations each year (1,028 and 445 in 2019, respectively), Fulcrum's latest year saw a decline (115 in total, a drop-off of 36). However, more pertinent to a cross-national comparison is the pattern that emerges regarding the type and size of the participating corporations. Namely, large multinational corporations represent the bulk of participants. For Fulcrum and *Presente,* they had little choice in the matter, since there was more interest from

MNCs in addition to a significant ambivalence (and sometimes hostility) when approaching

domestic corporations. For the HRC and the Forum, however, there is a choice to focus on larger

MNCs. The HRC's methodology states its approach to target significantly larger corporations as

well as the top-tiered among traditional economic and trading indices – leaving little focus on

smaller or medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Likewise, the Forum focuses on MNCs because

they are among the largest and most visible employers and their participation has helped to

establish the index concept allowing for broader participation in the long-term. There is then a

significant gap of engagement with SMEs and domestic corporations, particularly outside of the

U.S. and in developing nations. This presents an additional challenge for the HRC, since one of

their indicators asks whether MNCs have SOGI inclusion policies in each country they operate.

This should be examined further, since many of the HRC's other indicators were created with

U.S. state and federal laws in mind, which might not be consistent with laws in other countries

(particularly where laws criminalize same-sex relations or non-conforming expressions of

gender)[13].

Further patterns arise when examining the scope of participation, although an in-depth

examination is outside the scope of this chapter. Across the board, none of the civil society

organizations charge a participant organization to take part in their index. This might be

reconsidered with Fulcrum and *Presente,* who are considering a sustainable funding model to

provide follow-up materials and trainings to corporations. This perhaps follows in the model of

Stonewall, who charges fees by encouraging participants to join a peripheral program, "Diversity

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[13] Additionally, this is a hard issue to meaningfully capture, and can often reinforce the gaps between a policy that headquarters has "on the books" and the cognizance and implementation in their numerous country offices. In this case, one question that relies on corporate self-verification might not be sufficient to accurately portray the situation, yet could provide cover to MNCs to boast of global leadership without truly engaging the realities of LGBT applicants and staff in numerous other countries.

Champions". The incentives that are then created for said funding models, for both parties alike, are worthy of further examination. Additionally, the HRC, Stonewall, and Fulcrum each noted a rise in SOGI-inclusive policies among participants in subsequent years, which suggests a strong endogenous impact of the index (in addition to likely exogenous factors) that is worthy of further examination.

Extent of Transparency and Wider Applications

Significant patterns emerge when analyzing the transparency of each index, as well as its wider applications. For example, almost all of the civil society organizations are transparent when posting their final reports online, including their outcomes, methodology, and a list of indicators. This is especially so for the HRC, who provides numerous sites that showcase all details of the CEI[14] – even including granular details like changes of indicators over the years, a weighting of indicators, and additions to the index that are pertinent for gender identity issues. By contrast, Stonewall is a clear exception to the others and only publicly shares the final "Top 100" ranking corporations for the year. Other pertinent information, like its indicators or an in-depth methodological description, is not publicly available. An in-depth understanding of each indices' content is important, given how beneficial the CEI and WEI are to the creation of indices elsewhere. In particular, both Fulcrum and the Forum noted how informative the HRC and Stonewall indices were to their own survey tools (albeit adapted to the Ukrainian and South African contexts). In particular, *Presente* spoke to the additional support they received from the HRC with trainings and a regional consultation. This makes sense, since it seems the HRC is giving support to similar endeavors throughout Latin America[15]. Additionally, For *Presente*,

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[14] Available: https://www.hrc.org/resources/corporate-equality-index-about-the-survey
[15] https://www.hrc.org/blog/hrc-equidad-cl-workplace-survey-recognizes-major-employers-in-chile and https://www.advocate.com/commentary/2018/1/18/hrc-takes-workplace-equality-latin-america-and-around-world

Fulcrum, and Stonewall, the index was a launching pad toward a larger partnership with participating organizations – i.e. they were able to create tailor-made recommendations and deliver trainings, which have been instrumental to their brands and organizational platforms.

DISCUSSION

All five indices have ambitions to strengthen their capacity to create long-lasting positive change in their respective regions with respect to LGBT workplace and societal inclusion. However, there is variation as to the extent to which a systematic review process is in place. Stonewall is an exemplar in that respect as it implements a formal and consultative review process every three years that focuses not only on updating content but also on future challenges and opportunities. HRC also goes through a process of updating its index every few years, and regularly engages with its key stakeholders as part of its operations. However, a limiting factor is that many of the civil society organizations that operate the indices have small teams with fairly restricted budgets and resources to put into processes outside of the main assessment process. Moreover, for those operating in countries where LGBT inclusion is not sufficiently focused upon in legislation or corporate policy, there is a further constraint that many civil society organizations lack sustainable and domestic sources of funding for sustaining and growing the operation of an index.

Despite this, there appears to be three core common areas of future planning that the indices have focused upon. First, all discussed their plans for growth, where the more established indices are continuing to grow via the engagement of stakeholders and internal reviews, whereas the relatively recent ones are seeking to further strengthen the content and offerings from the index, such as training and support. Second, all are attempting to broaden out their participation by looking at ways to engage with a more diverse range of organizations, although it is seen to

be a challenge that is not likely to be overcome quickly. Third and finally, most acknowledge the need to embed an intersectional and "lived experience" perspective, such that it connects with other equality agendas and identities.

Although it is pleasing to see that all the indices are attempting to plan for the future, our analysis also uncovers several data gaps across the indices. In particular, the precise impact of corporate policy changes on LGBT employees themselves is somewhat lacking. While the organizations behind the indices promote evidence that more tolerant workplaces have the potential to positively affect business results, there is less consideration on the lived experience of employees; and where there is a focus, it is rather explored in terms of productivity as opposed to well-being. One way to get these insights is to validate employer data with employee surveys, but of all the indices discussed herein, only Stonewall provides that extra mechanism for validation through the presentation of employee survey data. Another way is through independent research that further analyzes data from the indices, yet only the HRC's index has sufficient data for analysis and also allows external access to that data. The trade-off that the more established organizations face is the increasing labor and resources needed for the assessment cycle and publicity or marketing of the index and its results. Therefore, they have to make decisions about what is important to focus on within their own remit. More work to develop wider collaborations and applications from external partners or researchers would be worth exploring more strategically by these organizations.

The broader application of the indices to policy making, particularly where employment non-discrimination laws are absent or limited, could be further explored. Given that the HRC and Stonewall's core remit is to operate as campaigning organizations and have teams with expertise in advocacy and advice on LGBT inclusive social policy, they can utilize their findings to

participate in government-led policy processes. There are challenges to acting in such an advisory capacity in both the U.S. and the U.K. due to other priorities in government agendas. In South Africa where the regulatory framework mandates employers report annual statistics on employee inclusion on the basis of race, gender and disability SAWEI and its partners could utilize their findings to advise government to consider expansion of employment reporting on the basis of sexual orientation as well as gender identity. However, as South Africa has yet to deliver employment equality on the basis of race and gender employees experiencing intersectional barriers related to race, gender and SOGI hope to greater socioeconomic inclusion from all who remain marginalized.

In Ukraine, a governmental ambivalence to SOGI workplace protections presented Fulcrum with an additional challenge when trying to influence an emerging non-discrimination policy. In response to their index, which covered SOGI in addition to gender and disability issues, the organization was invited to provide recommendations. While their recommendations on gender and disability were included, those that focused on SOGI were all excluded. Follow-up research and analysis can better bring light to the relationship between these indices and policy, particularly where there are additional sociopolitical challenges to enacting said policy.

Moreover, it is striking that all of the indices have a disproportionate balance of participation from MNCs operating in the country of focus rather than mass engagement of domestic companies, which might demonstrate more grounded evidence of the move toward social acceptance of LGBT people in that national setting. The introduction of norms and standards for LGBT inclusion from within MNC practice could easily be discounted as something imposed from outside the social context of a country or could mask core issues and areas of inclusion not covered when policies and practices from the overarching company are

carried over (or not) to the local context. Comparison across the indices reveals an echo chamber wherein only a few corporations can boast about their capacity to standardize LGBT inclusive policy implementation across their global footprint. However, it is not clear what this really translates to in terms of advancing LGBT inclusion on the ground nor how company practice, or signaling the virtue of LGBT inclusion externally, can make an impact among policy makers in countries where there are no protections for LGBT workers in law. Importantly, we need greater insight into the interaction between corporate practice on LGBT inclusion and national policy development, including advocacy toward the passage of non-discrimination laws. For example, to what extent are participating organizations engaging in the Open for Business[16] coalition or are actively endorsing the UN Standards of Conduct[17] that support the business community in tackling discrimination against LGBT people?

Furthermore, large law and professional services (accounting, consulting, financial services) corporations disproportionately participated in several indices. Therefore the indices tended to over-represent the experiences of an elite workforce and so are likely missing the experiences of LGBT people who have not had the opportunity for higher education and entrance into the professional class. When reflecting on the persistent stigma and discrimination that LGBT people face, it seems there are significant hurdles to gain access to such workplaces. This is why it is important to foster a more diverse representation of the sectors represented in the indices and encourage SME and domestic enterprises employers to engage.

CONCLUSION

This chapter offers one of the first cross-national analyses of workplace equality indices for LGBT people. By comparing five LGBT equality indices across the world, we reveal that

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[16] Available: https://open-for-business.org/
[17] Available: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Discrimination/Pages/Biz4LGBTI.aspx

there is a growing appetite to create positive organizational and societal change through

participation in these types of indices. However, there remain significant challenges, which must

be carefully considered to ensure long-term sustainability. In particular, there is a need to ensure

a well-resourced team is in place to carry out a fair and systematic assessment process and to

develop long-term relationships with key stakeholders. Moreover, gaining buy-in from domestic

organizations and SMEs, rather than larger MNCs, and focusing on employee experiences, rather

than just relying on evidence provided by the organization, are important to fully embed change

within a region. Overall, it is positive to see a growing number of indices emerging across the

world and to observe how the more established indices can help inspire and support them. We

hope that this pattern continues over the coming years and that this chapter will be helpful in

advancing our understanding of LGBT equality indices.

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Table 1. Summary of strengths and weaknesses of LGBT workplace equality indices

Topic		U.S. – HRC's CEI	U.K. – Stonewall's WEI	Ukraine – Fulcrum's CEI	South Africa –The Forum's SAWEI	Peru –*Presente's* D&E Diagnostic
Content of the Index	Strengths	Wide breath and details criteria clearly. Covers depth by stipulating strict rules that ensure stronger embeddedness.	Wide breadth and provides some general guidance. Covers depth by drilling down into specific identities.	Combines LGBT with issues on disability and gender to gain legitimacy. Map onto national, regional legal & rights standards	Wide breadth and depth, informed by Stonewall WEI. Grounded in local employment legislation.	Adapted some HRC indicators to Peruvian context through consultations with local stakeholders/LGBT community.
	Weaknesses	Coverage is more applicable to larger organizations with dedicated HR functions.	Coverage is more applicable to larger organizations with dedicated HR functions.	May miss breadth/depth by only focusing on internal-orientated policies.	Coverage may be a bit general until index is further established.	May miss depth as focused on internal-orientated policies, but does include public visibility.
Approach to Assessment and Validation	Strengths	Rigorous process guided by established principles. Consistent criteria and method of assessing each year.	Rigorous systematic process, focuses on evidence, trained assessors and use of employee survey to validate.	Uses partner organizations to help implement index. Uses a lighter touch assessment. Uses index as way to deliver training.	Follows a systematic process, informed by Stonewall and HRC. Evidence-based and digitized.	Uses partner organizations to help implement index. Uses a lighter touch assessment. Uses index as way to deliver training.
	Weaknesses	Perhaps too transparent, yet it is one of their core attributes.	Very labor intensive, requires a lot of time and resource.	Process is being established as in early stages of development.	Doesn't yet include staff survey/ external validation of evidence.	Process is being established as in early stages of development.
Ranking, Benchmarking, and Reward System	Strengths	Visible rankings of Fortune companies, and these inform other rankings. Listed according to score overall, as well as scoring by theme.	Lists online top 100 ranked organizations. Participants of "Diversity Champion" program receive further support. Awards for specific best practice areas.	High scoring organizations have choice to be published in report, ranked in order of score. Organizations can receive follow-up trainings.	Published report details highest achieving organizations as Gold, Silver, Bronze. Those that score below threshold are not publicly reported.	Final report classifies more advanced organizations as "inspirer" and less advanced as "beginner". Organizations can receive follow-up trainings.
	Weaknesses	Seems unlikely it can cover country offices of MNCs. Easy to receive a high/perfect score.	Increased participation has led to lower probability of getting into Top 100. Limited feedback for those not in paid program.	Given its broader remit, potentially hard to differentiate organizations specifically on LGBT issues.	Challenge to know which organizations took part and the progress each is making. Lacks incentives to take part.	Challenge to know which organizations took part and the progress each is making.
Reach and Scope of Participation	Strengths	No cost to participate. Focuses on large private sector organizations to ensure comparability. Participation rates have been rising.	No fee to take part but encouraged to pay for "Diversity Champion" program. Wide range of sectors represented, rising participation.	Allied with other civil society groups to help boost participation. No fee to participate in index or in follow-up trainings. Mostly MNCs.	No cost to participate. Small level of participation from MNCs, professional/legal services, but expanding	No cost to participate, in index or follow-up trainings. Has seen a rise in interest and participation over last year, yet most of this comes from MNCs.
	Weaknesses	No focus on small/medium sized organizations. Response rate difficult to track recently.	Very hefty time/resources to participate. Difficulty in engaging small organizations.	Significant challenge of engaging domestic organizations.	Less participation from domestic organization.	Domestic organizations were not as interested to participate.
Extent of Transparency and Wider Applications	Strengths	All methodology and indicators are online. Has been utilized within academic research. Has highly influenced indices emerging in other countries.	Conducts its own analysis of data. Facilitates sector-specific "knowledge sharing" networks. Has highly influenced indices emerging in other countries.	Methodology, indictors, index findings, are available in final reports, which are online. Findings directly feed into trainings.	Methodology, report findings, and indicators are available online. Has increased awareness and some competition among national organizations.	Methodology, report, and indicators are available online. Findings directly feed into trainings. Has allowed a public discussion on LGBT issues.
	Weaknesses	Limited research on employee outcomes, or changes in implementation over time.	Limited information online, hesitant to share indicators to the public.	Index is on hiatus, partly due to difficulties in engaging with potential funders/policy makers.	Wider applications not apparent yet. Small number of participants.	Wider applications not necessarily apparent, since it is now in the second year.

Table 2. Comparison of workplace equality indices in type of ranking and visibility of participants					
	HRC - U.S.	**Stonewall - U.K.**	**Fulcrum - Ukraine**	**The Forum - South Africa**	***Presente* - Peru**
Type of ranking	Perfect and higher performing are listed first and descend in performance	Numerically ranked – 1 is the highest performer	Perfect and higher performing are listed first and descend in performance	Classifies higher performing participants as Gold, Silver, or Bronze	Classifies higher performing participants as "Inspirer" and lower performing as "Beginner"
Visibility of all participants	All participants are listed and visible	Only lists "Top 100" higher performing participants, does not list lower performing	Only lists higher performing participants and does not list lower performing	Only lists higher performing participants and does not list lower performing	Does not list any name of participants, regardless of classification