



Wellspring
Philanthropic Fund



Photo Credit: WHER (Nigeria)

The Ripple Effects of Property Purchase Grants on LGBTQIA* Communities

Assignment Report
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Acronyms

CBD	Central Business District
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EWB	Equality Without Borders
GNC	Gender Non-Conforming
ID	Institutional development
LGBTQIA*	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transexual, queer, intersex, asexual and other
MSM	Men who have sex with men
REF	Ripple Effects Framework

Introduction

Over the past years, Dreilinden, Wellspring and other donors have been supporting LGBTQIA* organisations in the Global South and Global East to purchase their own properties. This has been done with little formalisation of the process and limited evaluations of the social and financial impact of the property purchases. There have been plenty of anecdotal reports on the positive effects of the purchases and the signal it sends to all stakeholders. It's a statement of longevity: this organisation is here to stay and has secured its own space, regardless of the strategic priorities of donors or the political environment. It also means that organisations are no longer dependent on landlords who may or may not be supportive of their cause. There are too many stories of organisations being denied renting a property or having to relocate due to ignorant owners.¹

Purpose

The purpose of this assignment, contracted by Dreilinden and Wellspring, has been to develop an Effects Framework that captures the immediate and longer-term effects that property ownership brings to queer CSOs and the broader ecosystem. The intention of the Framework is to serve as a tool for funders to help design, monitor, and evaluate projects that support property purchase. For CSOs the framework can be used to plan for property purchase as well as monitor and learn from how ownership changes the way they work.

It is accompanied by a storytelling component that will capture the voices of the participating stakeholders². The overall aim is to inspire CSOs that are ready to consider property purchases and for new donors to support these endeavours.

Here the term Property Purchases includes buying existing structure and refurbishing it and/or purchasing a plot of land and constructing a new structure.

Since May 2022, Hornbill Consultants have undertaken research to assess the effects of property purchase on grantees at an individual, organisational and movement level in the short and longer term. Using participatory methodologies, the Consultants reached out to 20 grantees and 5 donors (see Appendix 1).

Emergence of a Ripple Effects³ Framework

This report highlights the Key Findings of the research on the process and effects of property purchase leading to the development of the Ripple Effects Framework,⁴ a planning, monitoring and evaluation tool that can be used by CSOs and by donors who are considering property purchases or have already purchased. The Framework captures six long term effects of property ownership under key themes that include:

1. Enhanced financial stability and independence
2. More efficient and sustainable organisations
3. Empowered organisations and their staff
4. Healthier queer communities, organisations, and individuals
5. Greater integration of LGBTQIA* within the social landscape
6. Growth of the movement and actualisation of queer rights



Photo Credit: Accept (Romania)

1 Dreilinden Terms of Reference

2 Conducted by Singizi Consulting

3 A definition of the term effects as used in this report is included on p.17

4 The Ripple Effects Framework developed as part of this assignment shares several features in common with Ripple Effect Mapping - an evaluation technique developed by the University of Minnesota

The report ends with a list of key recommendations to be considered by Dreilinden and Wellspring. The key formal benchmarks of this process are outlined in Figure 1 below.

Activities	Timelines
Desk review, Preparatory work, Development of the research tools, communication with grantees	May - June 2022
Key Informant Interviews with Grantees	July - September
Meetings and consultations with Dreilinden and Wellspring staff and with Singhizi Consultants ⁵	Bi-weekly
Feedback session to Grantees - Focus Group Discussion and Presentation of the key findings and draft Ripple Effects Framework	Two sessions - 4 & 6 October
Feedback session to Donors - Focus Group Discussion and Presentation of the key findings and draft Ripple Effects Framework	Two sessions on 18 October
Consolidation, report writing and submission	Nov - Dec 2022

Figure 1 - Formal benchmarks for the research process

Profile of Participating Grantees

The 20 organisations were spread across five continents, with half (10) being from Africa. Some were established more than 20 years ago (ACCEPT, GENDERDOC-M, GuyBow, JFLAG) while others are 10 years or less (OTD, Single Step, Iranti, INEND, VOVO, ASEAN SOGIE). The diagram below shows their respective locations and where they are in the property purchase journey - 11 have completed and nine are in-process. The latter indicates that the decision to purchase has been made and they are on a continuum of purchase, construction, and completion.

Participating Donors

As part of the study, Consultants engaged with members of the following donors: Dreilinden, a private non-profit organisation that works for greater acceptance of gender and sexual diversity by means of grants, social investments, and networking; the Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, a private philanthropic foundation that supports the realisation of human rights and social and economic justice for all people; the Arcus foundation, an international charitable foundation focused on issues related to LGBT rights, social justice, ape conservation, and environmental preservation; Equality Without Borders, an initiative that helps individual donors connect with LGBTI equality projects and groups from around the world.

⁵ Consultants undertaking the Property Purchase Storytelling assignment

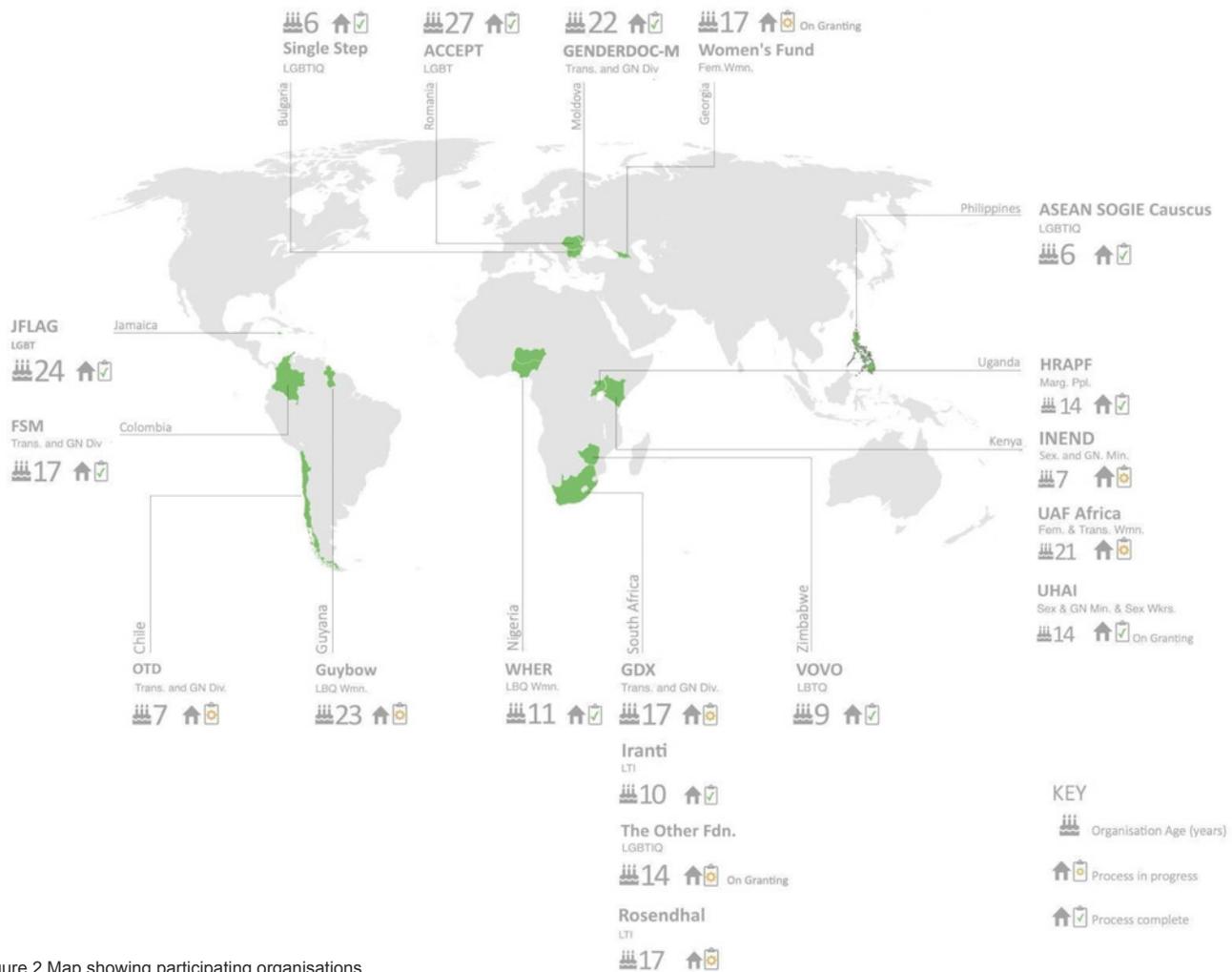


Figure 2 Map showing participating organisations

Methodology and limitations

The Consultants actively sought to embody the values of inclusion and participation throughout the assignment, with grantees, representatives and management of the donor organisations and other stakeholders. All consultations, bar one⁶, were undertaken digitally, using various online tools and platforms. The preparatory research and document review were foundational for the initial consultations and conversations with grantees. Invitations by email were followed up with appointments using Calendly, an online scheduling tool, at a mutually convenient date and time. Prior to the conversation, grantees were sent a set of guiding questions. All proceedings took place using the Zoom communications platform. Consultants used the audio and video recording feature to help capture data, to reference and verify it during the analysis stage. In most cases, the key informant interviews took place with the Director of the organisation. In instances where other staff (Programme, Finance, M&E), participated, the conversations gave a broader perspective on the property purchase journey. For the two grantees in Latin America, questions were translated into Spanish and the interview was aided by an interpreter. At the outset of the assignment, 14 grantees and two donors had been identified. Following consultations with Dreilinden, Wellspring, and other donors (Arcus, Equality without Borders, OSF), the final figure of grantees reached 20.

⁶ Face to face meetings with Iranti and Nurture and Wellness Retreat Centre (Rosendal)

Following the initial round of key informant interviews during July to September, the rich data was captured, organised, and analysed. At the bi-weekly consultation meetings with Dreilinden, Wellspring and Singizi, the Consultants proposed hosting feedback sessions for the grantees and for the donors. During the feedback sessions (Focus Group Discussions) in October, the Consultants presented the key findings, lessons learned and shared the draft Ripple Effects Framework. This process was developed and presented using Miro,⁷ an online collaboration platform that allows visual mapping and process visualisation, enabling different people to communicate and collaborate across formats, tools, channels, and time zones - without the constraints of physical location, meeting space and presentation equipment. Grantees were also able to showcase their property and the people behind it, using photographs and quotes.

Participatory Feedback Sessions provided an opportunity for grantees to collaborate, share experiences and ask questions. The process also enabled networking and cross learning. Following the four Feedback Sessions (two each for the grantees and donors), the Miro Board was made accessible to all participants, inviting them to share the presentations and make any comments, inputs, and ask questions. The Consultants responded to each query as appropriate and as required. The findings from the various processes enabled the Consultants to proceed with refining the Ripple Effects Framework (REF) and detailing it for this report. The process has remained iterative with opportunities for fine tuning after each bi-weekly meetings with Dreilinden and Wellspring, attended by Singizi.

Limitations

The sample of grantees that took part in the study were drawn from a network of contacts shared by Dreilinden, Wellspring, and Equality Without Borders. Consequently, all the grantee interviewees were CSOs that had already made a conscious decision to purchase property. Many also had met specific criteria for partnership in terms of their level of maturity, financial systems, and work focus.⁸ This purposeful⁹ sample therefore does not include CSOs from high income countries,¹⁰ nor those that have purchased property without approaching the aforementioned donors or their network for support,¹¹ nor does it statistically represent the broad range of LGBTQIA* CSOs that are out there. Snowball Sampling¹² allowed the consultants to identify and interview one CSO whose property purchase was unsuccessful; the limitations of sampling, however, preclude us from extrapolating this information into success and failure rates.

The most obvious limitation was the lack of face-to-face contact with grantees. Nothing can replace an actual visit to a physical space where interactions and engagements happen organically, on multiple levels with a diversity of people. Such visits also highlight the unique context of each grantee and how they have navigated the various issues, opportunities and challenges that are appropriate for their setting. It enables one to have a reality check and avoid making assumptions, judgements, and generalisations.

The main output of this assignment was to develop an Effects Framework with broad indicators, a tool that can be used by CSOs considering property purchases and donors who may consider funding such initiatives. While we believe that the framework has significant potential, its actual testing with stakeholders was beyond the scope of this assignment.

7 Please reach out to your contacts at Dreilinden or Wellspring to get access to the Miro board

8 Many grantees had completed a due diligence survey before being selected for support.

9 A purposeful sample is one where interviewees are selected "on purpose" based on their experience and knowledge

10 Chile and Romania are exceptions

11 Donors included, Arcus, Dreilinden, Equality without Borders, Open Society Foundation, Mackenzie Scott, Wellspring.

12 Snowball sampling takes place when one interviewee refers the researchers to another with similar experience



Summary of Findings

During the process of conducting the interviews, it became clear that the information shared by CSOs could be grouped into two parts; the first relating to the process of purchasing property which can be likened to a journey with well-defined steps. The process findings are associated with all activities related to the purchase of a property, up to the point of taking ownership and moving in. These steps together with CSOs experience of them, are described in the section “The Process of Property Purchase: Findings in Detail”.

The second area of information related to the effects that owning property had on individuals, organisational staff, and the wider queer communities. In analysing the effects, it became clear that there were immediate effects¹³ that CSOs recognised as soon as they took possession of their premises, and effects that took longer to mature. In many cases the immediate effects allowed the organisation to embark on a range of opportunities for institutional development that in turn contributed to the longer-term effects. This ripple pattern can be arranged as a Theory of Change and has led to the development of the Ripple Effects Framework outlined in Figure 3 below. The findings on the effects of property purchase have been grouped under six key themes in the section “The Effects: Findings in Detail”. A graphic representing the findings on effects reported by CSOs and how they interrelate, is shown in Figure 5. The process of developing the framework is described in more detail in a later section of the report.



Figure 3 The ripple effects theory of change

¹³ These comprised; a drop in monthly overhead costs, removal of short-term uncertainty, agency over the use of space, expanding the planning horizon, improved physical and emotional security, and scope for creativity and innovation.

The process of property purchase:

Findings in detail

This section highlights the key steps undertaken by grantees starting with the decision to purchase, planning for the property purchase, navigating the various financial issues, developing criteria for selecting the property, managing the actual construction, taking cognizance of the context in which each organisation operates.

The decision to purchase

The motivation and reasons to embark on the property purchase journey is based on a combination of diverse Push and Pull factors. Push factors are the reasons for leaving the current premises, while the Pull factors are the desires/anticipated benefits a property purchase will enable the organisation to realise. Additionally, in some instances, specific triggers¹⁴ have prompted CSOs to pursue the purchasing of a property at a particular point in time. Of the 20 grantees, the vast majority (15) considered purchasing a property to use as offices. Three (UAF, Georgia Women's Fund, Nurture and Wellness Retreat Centre (Rosendal)) saw a need for a dedicated wellness or retreat centre. Some LGBTIQIA* organisations (WHER, VOVO, Iranti, GDY among others) saw property ownership as an opportunity to incorporate various types of temporary accommodation on the same premises as their offices.

Push factors

The most common Push factor cited by grantees was insecurity – staff feeling unsafe, the perpetual risk of eviction, harassment, and violence experienced as LGBTIQIA* and human rights organisations and defenders. At Iranti's offices in the Johannesburg CBD, laptops were stolen. Staff also felt unsafe using the underground car park. Grantees also spoke about the threat of eviction by landlords that were not LGBT friendly. Grantees reported that such experiences have contributed to staff and the community feeling insecure and disempowered. In the case of Single Step in Bulgaria, the motivation to buy a property emanated from the inability to find landlords willing to rent. **“We saw over 100 properties, but no one was keen to rent it to an LGBT organisation. We ultimately said, “Screw you, we’ll do it ourselves.”**

Most organisations have spoken about the high cost of rent and the pressure of ensuring there are always sufficient funds for that budget line. For VOVO in Zimbabwe, the small two-roomed office was often crammed with community members as they couldn't afford to hire conference venues. **“People in the building gave us strange looks and gossiped about the people going to the 4th floor - who they were and how they looked. This puts our members at risk. It never felt like a private space.”**

Covid threatened the very existence of some grantees, like OTD, a transgender organisation in Chile. **“We have been paying rent since 2015. During the lockdown, we couldn't use it, but we were still paying rent. We were all working from home.”**

For other grantees, it became a Push factor whereby lease agreements were severed to save money and ensure the organisation survived. This experience also pushed some to break the renting cycle and explore purchasing their own property.

The high cost of rent (US\$2000 - \$4000 per month) in all large cities, be it Santiago, Kingston, Bucharest, Abuja, Cape Town, or Manila are increasingly prohibitive for LGBTIQIA* organisations. **“For the past 21 years, GuyBow has paid rent. When we add it all up, it is a significant amount that could've been used to buy a property.”**

Between 2016-2018, HRAPF in Uganda experienced several break-ins that sadly culminated with the murder of a security guard. Despite raising the fence and installing security cameras, at their own cost, staff continued to feel unsafe in the space. **“For us, rent wasn't a problem. Security was becoming a big issue and we needed to find an alternative solution.”**

¹⁴ Triggers are not always specific to LGBTIQIA* communities but prompt the decision to purchase at a particular time.

For the ASEAN SOGIE caucus in the Philippines, the offer of an 'exit grant' from their donor (Arcus Foundation) prompted them to purchase an office space close to the centre of Manila. **"It has provided psychological security to the organisation and opened up new possibilities of income generation in the future."**

Similarly, an LBQ organisation in Asia benefitted from an end of project grant from a European funder, back in 2015. **"While this was positive, the entire process was rushed as there was enormous time pressure to spend the money."**

Pull factors

Pull factors represent the anticipated benefits of property purchase; a desire to own a property, enabling grantees in turn to attain greater physical security and financial sustainability. All grantees spoke at length about the need to create a safe space - for staff, the organisation and for the communities. A place where LGBTIQIA* persons can feel safe, to be who they are in all their diversities and expressions. Having a space to call 'Home' was a universal aspiration for CSOs that embodied security on a physical, psychological, and spiritual level.

Organisations acknowledge the importance of space and services to address mental health issues and challenges such as trauma, violence, depression, anxiety, substance abuse frequently experienced by human rights defenders. For some grantees, the prospect of owning a property promised an opportunity to create wellness and retreat spaces for learning, healing, reflection, spirituality, and meditation. The Women's Fund in Georgia, Feminist Republic (UAF-Africa), the Nurture and Wellness Retreat Centre (Rosendal) in South Africa are some examples.

"UAF's vision is to create Feminist Republic, a healing farm in Kenya that is welcoming to all bodies and identities. An African feminist inclusive space for activists to strategise and that is transformative. A place for socialising and for having different conversations."

Connecting to issues of land justice and food security is another strong motivator. Since 2016, the Women's Fund in Georgia has been building a Feminist Residency - a healing centre for feminist activists constructed using straw bales, in a village outside Tbilisi. **"It will have eight bedrooms and cater for 21 people. Growing food using permaculture and cooking are important values of our centre."**

Creating a self-sustaining organisation that is less reliant on institutional donor funding is a vision shared by many grantees. Owning one's space is seen as part of the road to greater financial, organisation security.

For INEND in Kenya, renting a space has many limitations, in terms of the activities and alterations that can be made. **"Covid taught us that if we have a large enough space, many activities can happen on our premises, and we don't need to spend money on expensive hotels."**

For the past 12 years, The Other Foundation, based in South Africa has been renting office space. They are now in the process of purchasing their own premises. **"It fits into our long-term plan and makes financial sense. It will make the organisation more attractive."** For organisations to stay afloat means ensuring there is always enough money to cover the rent. Much time, attention and energy are invested in maintaining this budget line, often drawing focus away from the core programme.

Planning and preparations

Property purchases are often pioneer projects for CSOs in the absence of targeted and comprehensive 'How to' or 'Good Practice' guides and limited track records to draw from. There is no repository where grantees and donors can go to; to learn from organisations that have embarked on this journey and lessons they have learned. Grantees are navigating an uncharted territory with little formal guidance. Where property purchases have taken place, there is some documentation of the process, especially when conducted or requested by a donor. Equality Without Borders (EWB) in collaboration with Dreilinden for example has developed a Due Diligence questionnaire (Appendix 6) that prompts the applicant to consider some key questions pertaining to Developing a Real Estate Plan, Policy Requirements, Legal Issues, Longer-term Impact and Budget. This helps to guide the organisation and encourage them to consider all issues regarding the purchase.

Learnings and exchanges with other CSOs have until recently been limited, and thus each grantee is creating procedures that are deemed logical and necessary for their local context. In some sense they are each re-inventing the wheel. Through the donor network, some grantees – WHER, the Women’s Fund Georgia, INEND – have connected with other CSOs, including undertaking site visits to other parts of the world. EWB have more recently convened a learning session amongst a number of the CSOs interviewed as part of this study. These consultations and learnings have been vital to make informed decisions and choices. It has also broadened their scope and understanding of the property purchase journey.

Some grantees have developed Business Plans and/or a Property Purchase Policy to formalise and guide the board, organisation, and overall process. These are important documents that form the basis of a strategy and road map.¹⁵ They are also foundational for fundraising and resource mobilisation. While major decisions are endorsed by the Board, the bulk of the preparatory work rests on the shoulders of the CEO/ Director of the organisation. They hold the vision of this endeavour and undertake the scoping study - planning, advocacy, research, assessments, marketing etc, engaging staff, community members, donors, vendors, among others. As leaders, they often steer the process from the outset to completion by adding extra responsibilities and stress to already demanding positions.

“As the GDX CEO, I am holding the space for the Senior Leadership Team, the Board and the Staff. At some point, we shall appoint a Consultant to oversee the project. It’s very demanding and time consuming. We cannot do it all ourselves.”

Leaders have also established Building and Construction Advisory Teams and Steering Committees to delegate, engage and involve different staff and board members with property purchases.

Below are some experiences of the process, articulated by the grantees.

For VOVO, the road to purchasing our property was a difficult one. We approached several estate agents and after viewing several spaces, we found the ‘diamond in the rough’. It needed a lot of work and renovations. Active engagement of the Board and the Community are key values as are feminist approaches and non-hierarchical decision making.

Creating a UAF healing space for activists to rejuvenate was discussed back in 2017. A place where activists can rest and pause and where they have a sense of ownership. Once the Board approved the concept note, a consultant undertook a scoping study and Kenya was selected. We’ve had consultations with the local community. They’ve been very welcoming.

We had many issues with landlords. Buying became an option when EWB visited Nigeria. We engaged a realtor and saw many properties. The owner of one place thought we were not serious because we are all young. Once we had the money, he put up the price. In the end, we purchased a plot of land and built our own safe house. Nigeria is a capitalist society. Owning a building has elevated our profile. We are now taken seriously. Our reputation has increased. People can’t just barge in. We are here to stay. No one can shut us up!

It took JFLAG 3 years from resource mobilisation to purchasing the property. Wisely or unwisely, as the Director I made it my personal responsibility to oversee the project. It was very time consuming and added a lot of extra work to my already full portfolio. Hiring a dedicated Project Manager is my recommendation.

For INEND, it is more than an office space and organisational sustainability. We want to curate a safe space that outlives the organisation. A permanent place that is welcoming to young and older LBQ women and GNC persons. No such safe spaces exist for our community.

Figure 4: Quotations regarding the purchasing process by selected interviewees

¹⁵ These documents would be valuable additions to the proposed knowledge repository outlined in the recommendations section.

Financing the purchase

The ability to buy a property is only possible if there are adequate finances available - for purchase, construction, refurbishment, and completion. Finding this money is challenging for all grantees. Local banks are risk averse and reluctant to lend to organisations that focus on social effects. Organisations cannot easily access mortgages and loans and thus rely on cash purchases using funds from public and private foundations and individual fundraising drives. An overview of the funding landscape is outlined in Annex 5.

In some instances, the seed to purchase was planted by the donor during conversations with the grantee. In this regard, grantees spoke about the pivotal role played by EWB, Dreilinden, Wellspring, Arcus, Open Society Foundation, and others in turning a pipe dream into a reality. **“When EWB came to WHER, we spoke at length about our safety and security concerns. We never imagined buying a property. We knew nothing about such a thing.”** Several organisations - ASEAN, ACCEPT, GENDERDOC, and an LBG organisation in Asia benefitted from a lump sum gift as projects closed and monies had to be spent within a short time-period. In the case of the Women’s Fund in Georgia, a gift of \$1000 came from an individual donor in the Netherlands. This was an important contribution towards purchasing a plot of land on which they later constructed their retreat centre.

The use of reserve funds

All grantees are aware of the need for and importance of having a healthy Reserve Fund to act as a buffer, covering fixed costs for 12-24 months. Various strategies were cited to enable this to happen, including unspent monies from grants, exchange rate gains, and unexpected savings (e.g., incurred during Covid). Donors in-turn consider this as important for financial stability and encourage their grantees to find ways of bolstering a healthy Reserve. For Iranti, the Reserve Fund was used for the actual purchase of the property. **“We used the savings accumulated from not paying rent during Covid. A small grant from Dreilinden was used to upgrade the security and make the building wheelchair friendly.”** UHAI’s resource mobilisation strategy has included rental income from an office and two apartments, grants from institutional donors, fundraising events (e.g., a cocktail event in New York) as well as dividends and interest from savings and investments. All these contribute to building their Endowment Fund. In Uganda, HRAPF had purchased a piece of land as an investment some years previously. “When the decision to build our offices was approved, we sold that plot to pay for the construction.” Some organisations mentioned creating a dedicated Building Fund for their property purchase, enabling targeted monitoring, management, and reporting of expenditures.

Use of bank loans

Single Step managed to secure a social impact loan from UniCredit, a bank in Italy. They were also selected and assisted by two corporate donors – Facebook and Google. The Director was one of 150 community leaders around the world, selected by the Google.org foundation. Others include the America for Bulgaria Foundation. **“We worked in a focused way to find a place and were also lucky to have the support of Dreilinden. They understood from the first minute, and said, ‘We’ll see what we can do’.”** A crowdfunding campaign also contributed to the total budget of €1.2million.

Many grantees have also received in-kind non-financial contributions - materials, equipment, and labour from community members, other LGBTIQIA* organisations and allies. GuyBow for example cited receiving solar panels from Japan while ACCEPT received furniture from IKEA and a washing machine from Bosch. In Jamaica, the German Embassy donated office furniture to JFLAG.

“We worked in a focused way to find a place and were also lucky to have the support of Dreilinden. They understood from the first minute, and said, ‘We’ll see what we can do’.”

- UHAI

Capacity for financial management

Grantees are on a continuum, with varying levels of knowledge, skills and experience of financial management and resource mobilisation. Generally, Executive Directors/CEOs that reach out and do a lot of networking and fundraising have benefitted from attracting resources and creating new possibilities. Their drive, vision, energy, and motivation cannot be overstated. They are seen to make things happen, especially in organisations with more conventional hierarchical management structures and styles. In organisations with flatter structures, the tasks appear to be more evenly spread between more people, and there is more collective decision making. VOVO, INEND and Guy Bow are some examples where more than just the Director was present during our consultations and contributed towards the conversations.

Timelines for purchase

The timelines for property purchases can stretch from two years to beyond 10. This brings its own set of issues to manage and unplanned challenges to navigate. The most obvious is the impact of inflation on the cost of labour and materials. While exact percentage increases cannot be defined, grantees have shared their experiences of increased costs of land, building materials, energy, and specialists (artisans, lawyers, realtors, engineers etc.), especially since 2020.

Planning for disposing of property

While the organisation is functioning, the issue of ownership is clear. What happens if the organisation must be shut down or the property disposed of? This can be due to security reasons as in the case of the LBQ organisation in Asia where a Molotov cocktail was thrown onto the roof. **“The house had to be emptied. We had to sell the land which was very complicated. A lot of money was lost in the process”**. These matters are being considered by GDX at the outset of their property purchase journey. **“The constitutional position needs to be clear in the event the organisation is dissolved. Is the building sold or donated, and to whom, are important questions”**. For Foundation Santa Maria, this has been formalised whereby if they cease to operate, the building will be donated to another community-based organisation. These are important considerations and questions, as part of the Risk Analysis/Due Diligence, undertaken by the organisation in consultation with donors.

Criteria for selecting a property

An important question asked to all 20 grantees was about the criteria they used to select the purchase of their building or land. Overwhelmingly, the issue of safety and security was at the top of the list. Safe neighbourhoods are described as those where there are other queer spaces and/or where there is more diversity of populations – racially and in terms of class. Having embassies in the vicinity also makes such suburbs safer as the security levels are generally higher. Other indicators are high end or formal bars and restaurants, hospitals, and shopping centres. Grantees in East and Southern Africa – HRAPF, UHAI, INEND, Iranti – considered areas with a lot of foot traffic, such as the CBD/city centre, to be unsafe. **“For the UHAI office, we preferred not having a free-standing house. Being in an office block was safer as we were also more anonymous.”** JFLAG considered buying a property in a residential area but were advised against it by their director. **“Many had restricted covenants and having a legal background, I knew that would be a long and protracted process. We therefore consciously selected something in a commercial area.”**

“For the UHAI office, we preferred not having a free-standing house. Being in an office block was safer as we were also more anonymous.”

- UHAI

In South Africa, there are other complexities. Colonisation and apartheid divided cities, communities, and public spaces along racial lines, which are still evident. In one city, there are multiple parallel universes and issues of land justice are at the fore. While some areas are considered 'safer', they can be labelled elite and inaccessible to the queer community, especially using public transport (buses, trains, and minibus taxis). Grantees spoke about minimising the number of transfers staff must make from the CBD (a transport hub), saving both money and time. Access to sufficient safe and secure parking for private vehicles is another criterion used by grantees. VOVO mentioned the importance of water and how their location at the bottom end of town has assured them of a regular supply of water.

Affordability of course is another important criterion. INEND mentioned viewing both existing buildings in need of renovations and plots of land. **"A Valuer has been appointed to undertake a proper evaluation and recommend the most cost-effective option."** For the ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, their exit grant of \$100,000 was insufficient to purchase a free-standing building. Wanting to be centrally located, they selected a 35m² condominium close to the centre of Manila, which they purchased off-plan. **"We wanted a space for meetings with the possibility of hot desking and subleasing in the future."**

Managing the purchasing/construction process

Grantees spoke about having consultations with the community, staff, and the board at various levels of the property purchase journey. Rainbow House in Jamaica is home for four LGBT organisations: JFLAG, We-Change, Equality Youth and Transwave Jamaica. They collectively set up the Building Fund and also developed the criteria for purchasing the property. **"Out of 20 properties, we selected four that met the criteria. We chose one in New Kingston in a commercial area. It showed the most potential for our needs."** While all grantees have articulated the extra workload, the management and oversight has been largely kept in-house. Where possible and affordable, a dedicated Project Manager was or will be appointed (e.g., HRAPF, GDX, INEND, TOF). Being an uncharted journey, finding a suitable person with the relevant skills set – project management, real estate and understanding of social justice issues, among others – is challenging.

The Feminist Residency, a space created for women and queer organisations by the Women's Fund in Georgia has been on a long road since first purchasing the land, back in 2009. Construction started in 2016 and completion is dependent on enough funds being available. **"The process is evolving and developing organically. We are 80% there and need to complete the flooring and furnishing before opening in 2023."** For UAF, the conversation to have an African feminist farm, a healing space for human rights defenders began in 2017. To date they have secured \$2.5 of the total budget of \$10 million and the anticipated opening is in 2025. For other organisations, the process was much faster. HRAPF started their

"We (HRAPF) had a dedicated Project Manager for the duration of the building process. This ensured the construction went to plan."

- HRAPF

fundraising drive in 2019 and purchased the land. The bulk of the construction happened during Covid and was completed in 2022. They and others mentioned the importance of engaging professionals, such as architects, engineers, lawyers, and surveyors who can deliver on-time. **"We (HRAPF) had a dedicated Project Manager for the duration of the building process. This ensured the construction went to plan."**

Property purchase is a major undertaking for the grantee on every level, offering benefits but it comes with risks. Undertaking a Risk Analysis is an important exercise and grantees have done this at various levels of formality. The anecdotal evidence referred to risks associated with unsafe locations (extra security costs, transport), hidden structural problems, neighbourhood, growth potential, land use, budgetary (availability of funds, operational and maintenance costs). The Due Diligence (Appendix 6) is an important exercise that enables grantees to consider and quantify (where possible) the various risks and address these by identifying mitigating strategies.

Ultimately, the undertaking is one of learning, for the CEO, board, staff, and community members. **"As the Director of Iranti, I have learned that I don't have to do it all myself. There are people who have similar value systems with whom I can connect when I'm ready."**

Legal considerations

When purchasing a property, there are many legal issues to be aware of. These are often overlooked until a problem or dispute arises. The LBQ organisation in Asia is a case in point, where they wanted to sell the property after being damaged by fire. **“The land was under dispute and there were many bureaucratic complications. Getting everything in order was a costly exercise.”** ACCEPT in Romania purchased their building back in 1998 when property was cheap in Bucharest. Little consideration had been given to the legal ownership of the land on which the property stood. Getting this regularised has also been a complex and costly exercise. The actual registration of the property can also cause complications. INEND and Guy Bow mentioned the Title Deeds being under the personal name of the Director. **“INEND is a Community Based Organisation, and the purchase is in a single person’s name. We need to change the status and create a Trust.”** There are legal ramifications if, and when there are changes in leadership. Similarly changing land use from residential to commercial demands time, energy, and money. Having a knowledgeable and trustworthy attorney on standby is an important consideration especially when that knowledge is not available in-house.

Context specific factors

All 20 grantees shared their specific experiences from their particular situation and context. While commonalities can be established, it is important to take cognisance of each context and macro policy framework of that country, city, and location. Financial transaction processes and costs in Zimbabwe are far higher and complicated than transferring funds from the USA to Kenya for example. The legacy of colonisation cannot be overstated, especially in the British Commonwealth countries (Jamaica, Guyana, Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, South Africa). Town planning and land use policies in many instances are steeped in the history of Empire, where cities were divided on racial lines. The specificity and realities of living in post-apartheid South Africa raise issues of land and social justice. Similarly, for Romania, Georgia, Bulgaria, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, their realities have been shaped by the policies of the former USSR. Choices are made by organisations based on their specific political and socio-economic lived realities, which demand to be considered with sensitivity and nuances. The Georgia Women’s Fund cautions a copy and paste approach. **“Acknowledging there are general recommendations, the context of Armenia, Poland or Bulgaria is different because of their location, types of building and fundraising strategies.”**



Photo Credit: INEND (Kenya)

“INEND is a Community Based Organisation, and the purchase is in a single person’s name. We need to change the status and create a Trust.”

- INEND

The Effects: Findings in Detail

Definition of “effects”

In development practice, the term “results” is widely used to describe a chain of outputs, outcomes, and impacts, each contributing to the next in a linear sequence. In reality, social change more often follows a complex path where precise cause and effect can be difficult to determine. To reflect this, the TOR for this assignment uses the alternative term “effects” to describe changes that emerge from a less predictable, but interconnected process.

The ripple effect of property purchase

The findings of this evaluative process into the effects that flow from property purchase and ownership of a queer space have been represented using the Ripple Effects Framework, presented in Figure 3 and in more detail in figure 5 on the following page.

At the centre of the framework is the action of **property purchase** itself. **Immediate effects** reported by CSOs that tend to appear straight away, are shown in the surrounding layer (1). These include a drop in monthly overhead costs, the removal of short-term uncertainty, agency over the use of space, an expansion of the planning horizon, improved physical and emotional security, scope for creativity and innovation.

These **immediate effects** combine to provide CSOs with the opportunity to develop both the institution and the queer community across a wide range of critical areas. These **opportunities for institutional development** are shown in the second ring (2).

The research found that CSOs used a selection of **building blocks** (concrete activities) to support these areas of institutional development. These building blocks are summarised and listed in the following section of the report under each thematic area.

Finally, the **opportunities for institutional development** in Ring (2) combine to provide **longer term effects** that emerge over time. These have been clustered under thematic headings that include enhanced financial stability and independence, more efficient and sustainable organisations, empowered organisations and their staff, healthier queer communities, organisations and individuals, greater integration of LGBTQI within the social landscape, growth of the movement and actualisation of queer rights. Longer term effects of property ownership are shown in the third Ring (3).

In a sense, the changes that CSOs described are analogous to ripples which stem from a single event, spread outwards over time and encompass an ever-increasing range of effects.

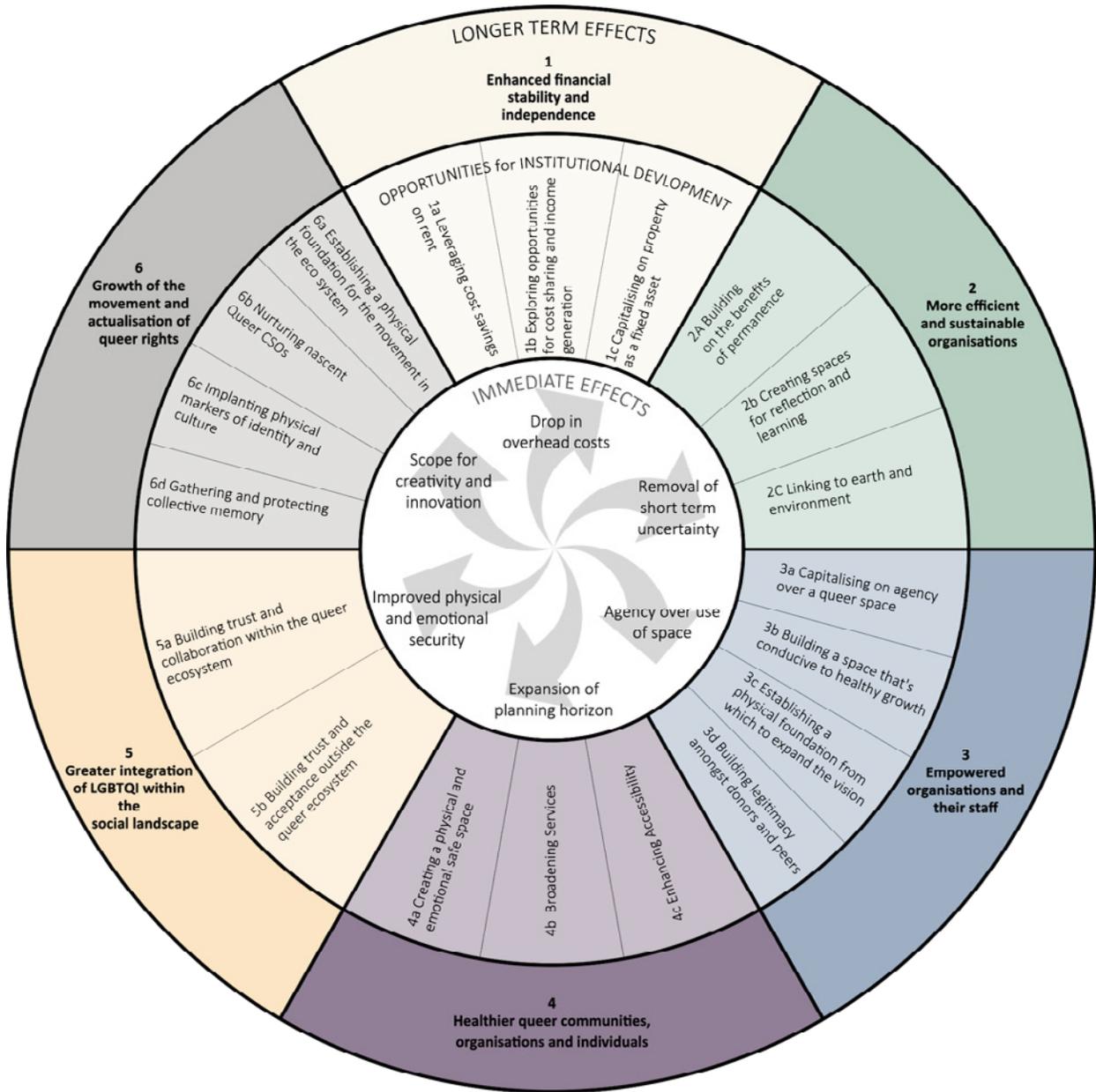


Figure 5 The findings of the research represented on the Ripple Effects Framework



Immediate effects

Interviewees spoke of effects on staff and the organisation that appeared almost immediately, such as:

- A **drop in monthly overhead costs** as a direct result of ending rental agreements. In many cases, grantees reported that rental rates were rising rapidly as demand for property in urban centres expanded in emerging economies.¹⁶
- The **removal of short-term uncertainty** that is part and parcel of contractual agreements with LGBTQIA* CSOs. While in theory, CSOs are protected under the legal terms of their rental contract, landlords often become hostile when they discover the nature of CSO's work and often resort to a variety of techniques to harass or evict them.
- The **agency over the use of space** that ownership brings is a simple but powerful effect. CSOs can expand the range of community events they host and become more visible while they, and the community participate in them.
- CSOs **expand their planning horizon** once they don't have to think about moving for the foreseeable future. Having a permanent home allows management staff to think beyond the end of the next lease agreement and focus on longer term plans.
- **Improved physical and emotional security** often stem directly from the relocation of the CSO to an appropriate location of their own choosing. Owning a space allows management and staff to feel comfortable and at home as opposed to living in someone else's space.
- The prospect of longevity together with agency over the use of space provide **scope for creativity and innovation** in terms of how the space can be used and how the community can benefit.

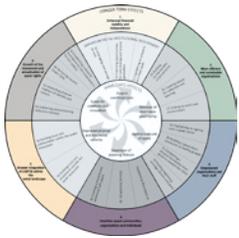
Almost all grantees and some of the Donors¹⁷ reported the immediate effects described above. From the interviews it became clear that these in turn allowed CSOs to develop aspects of their organisation across a range of areas that have been clustered using thematic analysis, under six broad themes (see numbered list below):

1. Enhanced financial stability and independence
2. More efficient and sustainable organisations
3. Empowered organisations and their staff
4. Healthier queer communities, organisations, and individuals
5. Greater integration of LGBTQIA* within the social landscape
6. Growth of the movement and actualisation of queer rights

While almost all CSOs reported development and subsequent longer-term effects across each of the six themes, the precise focus and level of institutional development varied. The following section describes these **six thematic areas** in more detail as well as some of the building blocks that CSOs have used to achieve them.

¹⁶ Guybow Guyana, JFLAG Jamaica, INEND Kenya

¹⁷ TOF confirmed that they had seen a broadening of vision within grantees who received support for property purchase.



Long Term Effects



1

Enhanced financial stability and independence

Almost all grantees, while appreciative of donor support for their work, were acutely aware of shifts in funding patterns and priorities. Funding that is available today may not be available tomorrow. Many grantees were keen to have greater independence, and even to become financially self-sufficient through generating income¹⁸ and/or establishing an endowment fund¹⁹. Many saw property ownership as a major part of this shift.

For UHAI, based in Kenya, conversations on how to become financially more self-reliant started back in 2010. The goal of their Endowment Fund is to raise \$50 million. **“We have a number of properties that we rent [out], saving accounts and also long-term investments.”** The properties are a combination of offices and apartments rented through the Airbnb platform. For GDX in South Africa, owning a property is an integral part of their Sustainability Plan. This includes conversations on how to reduce operational costs, making investments and ways to generate income. **“We consider owning our own space to be a smart investment that will enable us to save on rentals and will hopefully appreciate in value over time.”**

GENDERDOC-M in Moldova purchased their property back in 2001. With the subsequent cost savings, their important work (counselling, health information etc.) can continue now even if there are limited funds. **“Our project proposals don’t include rent and it’s when donors see ownership, they know the organisation is sustainable, because we managed to buy ours.”**

1a Leveraging cost savings on rent

With an almost immediate reduction in rent related overhead costs, CSOs reported that they were able to direct valuable core funding to other programmatic areas. **“Office purchase represents something that is way more sustainable. It’s a massive savings opportunity, but it also adds a level of stability to the movement” – JFLAG**

This was especially valuable for smaller organisations who were not able to fund raise easily to cover overhead costs.²⁰ Other organisations felt that no longer including rent as an overhead cost on project proposals made them more attractive to prospective Donors.²¹

While many organisations anticipated the benefits of no longer having to worry about rent as an overhead, many had yet to experience the unanticipated costs related to property ownership. These are detailed in the section that follows.



Artwork Credit: UHAI EASHRI (Kenya)

¹⁸ Single Step in Romania has been founded on a social entrepreneurship model.

¹⁹ UHAI in Kenya has set a target endowment fund of 50 million dollars of which they have already secured 4 million.

²⁰ JFLAG noted that securing funding to cover overhead rental costs was especially difficult for emerging trans organisations.

²¹ GENDERDOC-M,



>> Building block activities

When exploring opportunities for leveraging cost savings on rent, organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of enhanced financial stability and independence:

- redirecting savings on rent to programs and/or maintenance

Using cost savings during periods of lower funding, to maintain essential services including:

- drop-in counselling
- emergency protection and shelter
- provision of voluntary counselling and testing

1b Exploring opportunities for cost reduction, cost sharing and income generation

Several grantees have had opportunities to share their newly acquired space with like-minded CSOs. In some cases, arrangements for cost sharing have been used to help offset overheads.²²

Purchasing a property often allows CSOs to acquire space that is more appropriate to their needs than rented properties. Community meetings and workshops are common for many of the grantees. Holding these events within their own premises saves on cost (when compared to using hotels) and means that events take place in surroundings that are conducive to queer identity.

For a smaller number of grantees, newly owned space has been used directly to generate income. Hot desking and subleasing are also being explored as opportunities for income generation. **“VOVO rents out the space to an NGO, used on a weekly basis. They pay us some money and we offer them use of the WIFI. It works for both parties.”**

From the conversations, Single Step and UHAI have made the greatest in-roads with income generation. Single Step in Bulgaria have created a venue that serves as a queer entertainment centre at weekends, an exhibition space, and an events venue for local commercial companies. UHAI in Kenya generates income from one of their properties rented as commercial office space and uses another two for short-term rented accommodation. INEND in Kenya is also actively exploring other revenue streams that will enable the organisation to cover overhead costs. **“Finding funds for overhead costs is also becoming an issue with donors, as so much is earmarked for programme activities.”**

These new opportunities that generate income must be accounted for and managed separately. UHAI and Single Step for example have well established income generating streams and their accounting systems have a profit and non-profit arm. **“The income from the bistro, renting rooms for meetings and the club goes to run the Single Step Foundation that provides psycho-social services to the LGBTIQ community.”**

>> Building block activities

When exploring opportunities for cost reduction and cost sharing, organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of enhanced financial stability and independence:

- cost sharing overheads with partners
- providing temporary Office Space and “hot desks”
- hosting private events
- providing a venue for Commercial Entertainment
- renting short term accommodation



Photo Credit: INEND (Kenya)

²² JFAG has shared space in the past and intends to do so again with Trans CSOs in their newly acquired premises.



1c Capitalising on property as a fixed asset

Several grantees recognised their newly owned property as a smart investment²³ and the potential to use it as equity for future borrowing. Only a small number of the CSOs interviewed had yet done so, however.²⁴

Grantees are thinking out of the box and considering new ways of generating income, from hot desking, space for events to temporary accommodation and eateries. How these ideas get actualised is part of the learning curve. To date, few grantees have institutionalised these activities with policies and costed business plans.

>> Building block activities

When exploring opportunities capitalise on property as a fixed asset, organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of enhanced financial stability and independence:

- using property as collateral to guarantee loans

Potential hazard – the unanticipated costs of property ownership

While property ownership eliminates the ongoing cost of rent, not all grantees have anticipated new costs for maintenance and repair. For some, these unanticipated costs were still being discovered. All the problems that were previously the landlord's responsibility are now new realities for the grantee – breakages of lights, windows, geysers, stoves, or gates. While grantees have reported increased cost of utilities (water, electricity, gas), there have also been unanticipated costs such as purchasing generators or inverters which have become essential items in countries such as South Africa.

Strengthening existing security has also been cited as an additional cost by several grantees. For Iranti, their immediate concern is the December 2022 holidays, requiring some out-of-the-box thinking and strategies. "It's a stand-alone house. We cannot leave the property empty. We haven't budgeted for what the security company is quoting. It is not a lock up and go building." Similarly, organisations now must invest and budget for building, fire, and contents insurance. The cost of the latter is often unknown at the planning and building stages. INEND recognises that for effective management, their new property will require a facilities manager, someone with relevant skills to manage the site. This is an additional salary and cost to the organisation.

²³ This was especially true in countries where emerging economies were pushing property prices upwards (Colombia, Jamaica, Nigeria, South Africa, Romania, Philippines)

²⁴ Single Step in Romania obtained a bank loan from UniCredit



Photo Credit: Iranti (South Africa)

2

More efficient and sustainable organisations

For all grantees that have rented premises, their experience was one of transience and impermanence. The flexibility to “get up and go” at short notice²⁵ was for the most part, outweighed by accompanying administration, bureaucracy, stress and anxiety for management and staff.

Ownership on the other hand has brought opportunities to move towards longer term financial planning and to develop a space that is more conducive to sustainable, learning organisations.

2a Benefits of permanence for administration and planning

The sense of permanence that emerged from working in their own space, was a significant change for almost all grantees. Grantees reported that this had an immediate effect in reducing feelings of insecurity for staff. With fewer restrictions on access to their premises, many CSOs continued to build on this by becoming more flexible about the way they worked, combining both in office and remote working.²⁶

The frequent moves associated with renting resulted in some grantees misplacing or losing important documentation. Administrators regarded the ability to securely preserve and archive important documentation in an owned property (often part of their legal obligations) as a major benefit.²⁷ This removes one potential line of attack from hostile authorities. For others owning property relieved the huge bureaucratic headache of changing official addresses for bank accounts and registration documents.²⁸

>> Building block activities

When exploring the benefits of permanence for administration and planning, organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of more efficient and sustainable organisations:

- introducing flexible working arrangements
- establishing robust systems for storing and archiving documents
- shifting from short to long term planning

25 Iranti cancelled their lease during the onset of COVID 19 lockdowns in 2020 and ultimately realised savings in rent that contributed to the purchase of their new premises

26 UHAI Kenya

27 ACCEPT in Romania highlighted the need to securely preserve financial records for possible future government audit.

28 ASEAN SOGIE Caucus



2b Creating spaces for reflection and learning

Many grantees took the opportunity to move to larger premises when purchasing. This in turn has allowed them to create designated spaces for rest and reflection.²⁹ VOVO in Zimbabwe described how this has helped them focus on more innovative approaches to their work **“Having a serene environment to work from has made us more effective as a team.”**

ACCEPT in Romania purchased their property in 2000. **“Owning our space has given colleagues a peace of mind and reduced our stress levels. It is a welcoming space for LGBT refugees and the transgender community.”**

The Women’s Fund in Georgia and UAF in Kenya see this as an opportunity for “healing” for queer activists and human rights defenders.

>> Building block activities

When creating spaces for reflection and learning, organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of more efficient and sustainable organisations:

- setting aside space for thinking in quiet areas of the property or its surroundings
- creating time away from routine work to pause and reflect
- feeding learning from reflection and experience into smarter operations

2c Linking to earth and environment

Many of the grantee’s cited a commitment to earth and environment and expressed this through the rehabilitation and/or construction of their premises. The Women’s Fund in Georgia have constructed a straw bale house while Guy Bow and Nurture and Wellness Retreat Centre (Rosendal) plan to include a green energy study centre and kitchen garden. UAF have already secured over \$2.5 million for their healing farm in rural Kenya and have plans to become self-sufficient in water and electricity. They hope to use fair trade practices for construction and procurement with materials coming from local communities and cooperatives. This intersection of queer rights with environment and sustainable building was particularly prevalent amongst CSOs that are founded on feminist principles.

>> Building block activities

When linking to earth and the environment, organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of more efficient and sustainable organisations:

- investing in green energy for power (e.g., solar)
- engaging in food production (e.g., vegetable gardens)
- employing green construction techniques (e.g., straw bale)

Potential hazard

While the majority of CSOs reported that property purchase was a step forward from their experience of transience and impermanence, a few³⁰ also recognised that in hostile and volatile environments, this permanence curtailed their ability to “up and move”. The LBQ organisation in Asia ultimately had to dispose of their premises at a financial loss when the environment became particularly hostile.

²⁹ UHAI, GENDERDOC-M, VOVO, Women’s Fund

³⁰ An LBQ organisation in Asia and the ASEAN SOGIE Caucus in Philippines



3

Empowered organisations and their staff

“When you own a property, it means that you know you are there for the longer term, you have something that you can use in whatever way is appropriate, it brings a great sense of confidence, and allows others to have confidence in you and what you are doing” – The Other Foundation

3a Capitalising on agency over a queer space

Grantees reported that one of the biggest benefits of owning a space is being able to use it in ways that they themselves feel are appropriate. Owning one’s own space opens many new opportunities and possibilities that were previously not considered or possible. The most obvious is the freedom to create and curate. Spaces can be remodelled, and many renovations made without the need to seek permission from landlords.

For FSM in Colombia, this agency also means that trans people can gather for formal meetings, workshops or simply drop in for coffee with other members of the community. In Nigeria, WHER’s newly constructed premises with an outdoor gazebo has created a private space that allows masculine presenting women to meet comfortably in an otherwise hostile environment. In South Africa, Iranti have been able to use their premises to run numerous events including community celebrations, registration events and weddings that would otherwise require special permission from landlords. **“It’s incredible. If we were in a rented premises, we would have to seek permission, it might not be possible, we have so much more agency over what we do in our space and how we do it”** – Iranti

>> Building block activities

When capitalising on agency over a queer space, organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of empowered organisations and their staff:

- displaying markers of queer identity (flags, posters, murals)
- expanding the range of functions and events
- adapting operating times to suit needs of staff and community
- remodelling the space to suit their specific needs

3b Building a space conducive to healthy growth

While two thirds of grantees interviewed (14) were well established (in existence for 10 years or more), just under a third (6) had emerged in the last ten years. For these organisations, growth remains part of their medium-term plan. JFLAG noted the importance of having a space conducive to healthy growth; having the flexibility to share a permanent space when the organisation is still small, and then to grow into it as staff numbers increase.



Photo Credit: Fundacion Santa Maria (Columbia)



Several grantees mentioned their vision for the property beyond meeting immediate needs. This growth and expansion take many different shapes and forms. For HRAPF and JFLAG it is the physical expansion of the existing structure. **“While the new space can cater for some community events in Kingston, our vision is to do further renovations in the future”** For Iranti and ACCEPT, it may be purchasing the neighbouring property. Where offices have been built from scratch on empty plots, the designs have factored-in the likely expansion at a future date. HRAPF in Uganda is a case in point. **“Our dream is to have four storeys. For now, we could only afford to build two high”**. In many cases stability, flexibility of use and expansion only became possible through ownership. For others, it is creating space and opportunities for new services on-site for community members, such as a food garden (Guy Bow, VOVO), a library, a gym/wellness centre, and other social enterprises.

>> Building block activities

When building a space conducive to healthy growth organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of empowered organisations and their staff:

- remaining flexible in how space is used (including sharing and sub-letting)
- developing plans for expansion
- planning for purchase and ownership of additional spaces

3c Establishing a physical foundation from which to expand the vision

Almost all grantees reported that ownership removes uncertainty around the permanence of a physical base and allows management to focus instead on supporting the community. Having this additional space to think, leads in turn to reflection on the organisation’s mandate and broadens aspirations for community support.

For ACCEPT in Romania, ownership, and subsequent financial stability, has allowed them to respond more effectively to Ukrainian LGBTQIA* refugees. They are also able to consider models for a temporary shelter that can generate income as short-term accommodation at a later stage.

VOVO in Zimbabwe reported that since moving to their new home, they have been able to think differently about their role. **“The conversations are very different, in terms of what we want to do and what we want to change. The type of assistance that people are requesting is also different; we have shifted from legal reform and dug deeper into issues. The space allows individuals to interrogate themselves”**

>> Building block activities

As part of establishing a physical foundation from which to expand the vision organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of empowered organisations and their staff:

Using the physical and thinking space to:

- build a longer-term vision for the organisation
- broaden aspirations for programming
- explore and evolve organisational mandate

3d Building legitimacy amongst donors and peers

As well as bringing practical benefits, owning premises impacts on the ways CSOs are viewed by donors and peers. For the most part, grantees reported that this has been positive. The ASEAN SOGIE Caucus feel that ownership has increased their credibility and added to their track record; peers tell them **“Your donors must really trust you.”** Government and civil society now also see the caucus as a reliable partner.



WHER in Nigeria reported that since becoming owners, the community have started to regard them as a “big sister”. “It’s easier now to call people (to our offices) to meet with others. Before we would see people bickering and fighting. Once the report gets to us, we say ‘hey guys, come, kiss and make up’, and you know they just do that; they’re beginning to see us in a leadership position” - WHER Nigeria

GENDERDOC-M in Moldova reported that removing rent from grant applications to Donors has helped them appear more sustainable, less likely to disappear, and has added value to their reputation.

“It shows that you are a very sustainable organisation and that you will not disappear next year after implementing just one project” - GENDERDOC-M

For HRAPF in Uganda, property ownership has brought visibility and recognition in the sector but has also led to some challenges. Now that others perceive them as having resources they have been called upon, to provide financial support to individuals which is beyond their mandate and means.

>> Building block activities

As part of building legitimacy amongst donors and peers’ organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of empowered organisations and their staff:

Using the space its perceived longevity to:

- promote a reputation as established, serious, and professional
- build strategic relationships with donors



Photo Credit: Iranti (South Africa)

Potential hazards

Some interviewees recognised that property ownership required new roles for dedicated staff to manage their premises and to oversee routine maintenance and repairs. During the period that organisations were adjusting to this new reality and creating dedicated roles, these responsibilities were taken on by existing members of staff, sometimes drawing their focus away from core work.³¹

31 Interview with IRANTI



4

Healthier and safer queer communities

4a Creating a physical and emotional safe space

Safety and security are a common and a high priority for LGBTQIA* CSOs. This is particularly true for those operating in hostile environments. Ownership has allowed many to enhance the physical safety of their space through the choice of location,³² installation of appropriate security features, and linking with local security services. UHAI in Kenya occupies the whole floor of their premises in Nairobi giving them control over access while WHER in Nigeria have improved their relationship with the police now that they are recognised owners. For HRAPF in Uganda,³³ visibility of their new premises has strengthened their sense of security. They have not recorded a single security incident since moving and have increased numbers of clients who report feeling safe when approaching the premises.

Emotional safety is hugely important for queer communities who are weathering shifting political winds, shrinking civic space, queer, and gender backlash. During elections, politicians frequently target the queer community as part of a strategy to woo conservative voters. Grantees who own property reported that they felt more secure and can resist being pushed underground should incoming political leadership prove to be hostile. In extreme cases, even property ownership is unable to provide shelter for CSOs in particularly hostile environments.³⁴ The LBQ organisation in Asia were forced to give up their property following a tense period during which their premises were attacked and set on fire.³⁵

“You know, like we are actually not invisible, we’re here. That’s really very powerful.”

– WHER

The term “feeling at home” was commonly used by grantees to describe the enhanced sense of security and belonging that emerged from owning a queer space.³⁶ For FSM in Colombia this included being able to gather informally in the kitchen for impromptu conversations between staff and members of the community, sharing a coffee or preparing a meal together. In Nigeria, WHER described how their new premises “feels like home” and noted that this was the first time many of them had felt like this.

“Having a place to call home, the pride that comes from that is huge for a person and an organisation.” - UHAI



Photo Credit: INEND (Kenya)

32 GENDERDOC-M chose to purchase an office in the vicinity of the Turkish Embassy which has afforded increased security.

33 HRAPF suffered multiple violent and intimidating events prior to their purchase and relocation to new premises in Kampala.

34 ASEAN SOGIE Caucus in Philippines, INEND and UHAI in Kenya all reported increased anxieties over recent or upcoming change in political leadership.

35 The organisation reported that this was a difficult period when anti LGBTQI legislation was introduced. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that the purchase was carried out quickly without due process.

36 INEND in Kenya plan to name their new property “Forever Home”



- queer friendly exercise gyms, swimming
- entertainment and social gatherings

Fostering health and wellbeing,

- hosting retreats for mental, physical, and spiritual wellness
- providing counselling, psychotherapy and drop in support

Promoting queer culture,

- hosting queer cinema art and drama

Supporting income generation and careers,

- providing careers advice
- supporting queer entrepreneurs

4c Enhancing accessibility

Grantees prioritised locations and buildings that were accessible to the queer community in their selection process. Many were also conscious that once purchased, they needed to enhance accessibility for those uncomfortable with visibility when approaching and entering, as well as for those who are less able. Alterations to make spaces more inclusive include constructing ramps and widening doors for wheelchair access. Being available at short notice to counsel individuals in emergencies also influenced how staff made themselves and space available when operating from the new premises.⁴⁷

>> Building block activities

As part of enhancing accessibility organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of healthier and safer queer communities:

- positioning the space in an appropriate location
- catering for privacy and discretion of staff and visitors
- providing access for less abled groups
- tailoring schedules for access

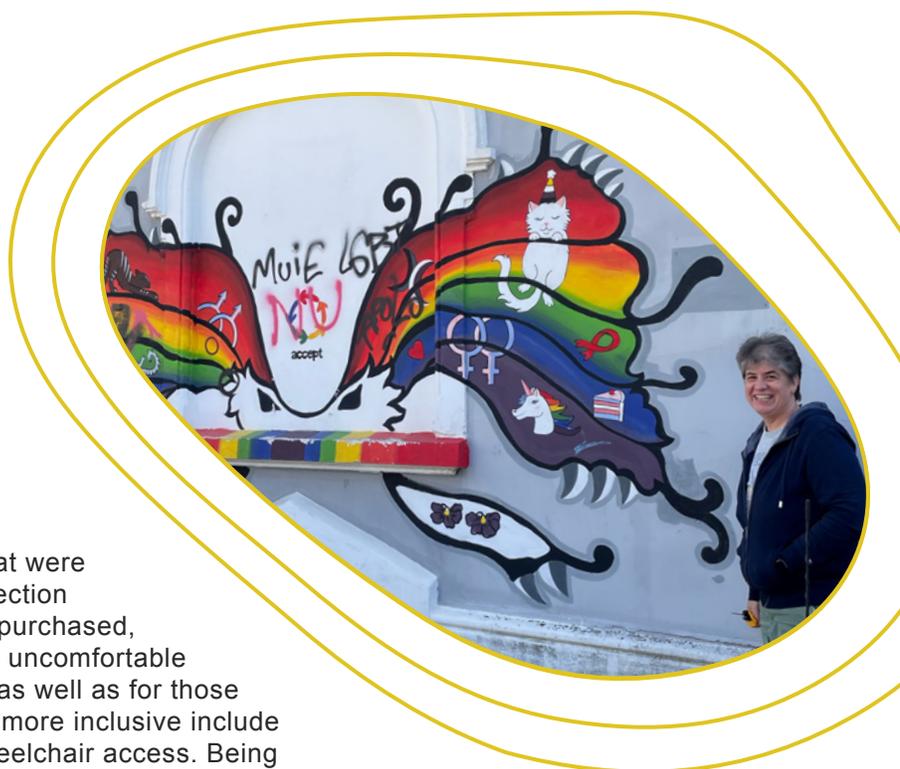


Photo Credit: Accept (Romania)

Potential hazards

While the majority of CSOs felt that owning a property made their staff and the community who used it, feel safer, most were also aware that safety is relative and can change rapidly with shifts in the economic and political context. Some organisations were based in countries where changes in political leadership promised to shift attitudes towards LGBTQI*,⁴⁸ often potentially for the worse. Being identified with a particular location was seen to pose a potential risk if the context were to become particularly hostile.

⁴⁷ ACCEPT noted that they frequently have individuals who drop-in in need of counselling.

⁴⁸ Kenya, Philippines,



5

Greater integration of LGBTQIA* within the social landscape

For many organisations, owning a space represents an important step towards integration of LGBTQIA* persons within the wider social landscape. Owning property helps to establish CSOs within the queer ecosystem; It also brings them physically close to neighbours with whom they must develop relationships.

5a Building trust and collaboration within the queer ecosystem

Many grantees described how owning a space and having greater agency over its use, allowed them to hold dialogue events with the community and other queer CSOs. This was driven in part, by the challenge of finding suitable queer friendly spaces.⁴⁹ In some cases this has led to dialogue with CSOs engaged in human rights for other marginalised groups.⁵⁰ FSM reported that their conference room is now popular for meetings because **“it’s safe physically as well as safe in terms of respect and recognition of other social agendas.”** JFLAG in Jamaica at the outset of their property purchase journey identified four organisations that will be housed in Rainbow House, creating a hub for the community. **“Our property brings at least 30 people together. We have created an epicentre for the LGBTIQ movement that strengthens the partnership model and fosters collaboration.”** - JFLAG

As well as building trust, widened dialogue has also allowed other queer CSOs to observe the benefits of ownership first-hand; a number have decided to investigate property ownership for themselves. Many of UHAI’s grantees in Kenya are now asking them for advice, driven in part by a shift in thinking towards greater sustainability. **“Everyone wants to own their own building for similar reasons, security, sustainability a place to call home”** - UHAI

>> Building block activities

As part of building trust and collaboration within the queer ecosystem organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of greater integration of LGBTQIA* within the social landscape:

- using the space to promote dialogue between LGBTQI CSOs, allies and donors
- expanding outreach to other civil society groups
- encouraging others to learn from and consider property purchase



Photo Credit: Iranti (South Africa)

49 UAF described difficulties in finding commercial spaces that were welcoming to their constituent sex workers, while Iranti describes challenges in getting recognition of different gender identities by those running conventional retreat centres.

50 FSM in Colombia reported how their centre is now a popular venue for events held by CSOs promoting the rights of indigenous groups.



5b Building trust and acceptance outside the queer ecosystem

While building dialogue and trust within the queer ecosystem is important for growing a movement, building trust outside the ecosystem is important for LGBTQIA* acceptance and integration. Many grantees described how this began with constructing positive relationships with neighbours and unlikely allies. Single Step for example regularly rents out their space to companies such as Master Card for staff functions and meetings. The venue is also used to host children's birthday parties and meetings for political parties. **“All these collectively contribute to raising awareness in a non-activist way, leading to positive social change and how the centre is perceived.”**

The Women's Fund Georgia initially had tensions with local villagers as they were seen as outsiders. Over time, and after a series of meetings with the local community members, these have eased and become more positive. Now villagers (and local women in particular) understand the purpose of the centre and see new prospects of collaborating with WF projects or even gaining employment as a result of the centre. UAF in Kenya held meetings with local women's groups in areas where they are constructing their retreat centres to ensure that such tensions don't arise. WHER in Nigeria recounted how the presence of masculine presenting women around their premises prompted a neighbour to ask if they could offer support to her daughter who was coming out as lesbian. While these are small steps, grantees felt they were important to secure their place in the community. Relationships with law enforcement officers can also change in positive and unexpected ways as experienced by WHER. **“The Head of Police lives in the neighbourhood. He sent a personal message saying we should notify him if we have any problems.”**

Iranti in South Africa has pursued more formal engagement outside the queer ecosystem. They invited the Department of Home Affairs to their premises to issue identity cards with appropriate gender markers to members of the trans community. **“The government came to us. They brought a big truck with their staff and equipment. On the day, over 40 people were helped. We didn't need anyone's permission to set it up.”** Iranti also made arrangements for a government official to preside over a trans wedding that was celebrated in their garden. Iranti views this as an important step towards holding duty bearers to account for their services to the LGBTQIA* community.

For many grantees, ownership, and the physical presence it brings has also helped establish social visibility. The level of visibility that CSOs consider appropriate however, is not uniform across all countries. Women's Fund Georgia and UAF in Kenya have chosen to locate their centres in rural areas while Guy Bow in Guyana has chosen to locate outside the capital Georgetown. VOVO recognises that there is a growing movement of people from the capital (Harare) to the quieter second city where they are situated. Both UHAI Kenya and ASEAN SOGIE Caucus Philippines do not display sign boards to avoid unnecessary attention.

>> Building block activities

As part of building trust and collaboration outside the queer ecosystem organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of greater integration of LGBTQIA* within the social landscape:

- constructing relationships with neighbours
- engaging other civic and commercial groups in the community
- providing direct access to LGBTQI for Gov. service providers
- enhancing queer visibility through a physical presence

Potential hazards

While the majority of CSOs reported that ownership of property enhanced their status amongst peers, some reported the potential for jealousy regarding the CSOs good fortune⁵¹ and recognised that this would be something they would have to manage carefully.

51 IRANTI, HRAPH, INEND



6

Growth of the movement and actualisation of queer rights

6a Establishing a physical foundation for the movement in the ecosystem

Several grantees noted the symbolic significance of owning property as part of an important transition from invisibility to visibility, impermanence to permanence. There is a sense of empowerment that comes with owning a physical structure which has enabled staff and community to feel they are the ‘masters’ of their own destiny and that this cannot be taken away from them. **“For trans and gender diverse persons in Colombia, renting has always been a struggle. For 17 years we sold clothes, had events etc. to raise money to pay the rent. Since we have our own building, we have created a safe space and drop-in centre for the community. We also offer space to other groups. It’s an empowering space where people ‘feel the pride’.”** – FSM

For feminist CSOs, land and property ownership are seen to challenge embedded patriarchal systems.⁵² GDX and Iranti also see it as part of the land justice struggle particularly for LGBTQIA*persons who intersect with previously disadvantaged groups in South Africa.

For most however, the most important aspect is the establishment of a stable foundation for the queer movement. **“We want to have a strong foothold, especially as there is a rise in conservative forces. Having our own space that cannot be taken away is really important for our community”** - OTD.

The majority of CSOs recognised the value of property purchase and the ensuing financial stability, in helping them to adapt to shifts in funding patterns. INEND in Kenya noted that many CSOs representing men who have sex with men (MSM) have grown under the support of the Global Fund.⁵³ As the volume of funding from this source reduces, many CSOs will face challenges. They feel that property ownership can help CSOs to absorb funding shocks and build sustainability not just for themselves, but for the movement as a whole.

>> Building block activities

As part of establishing a physical foundation for the movement in the ecosystem, organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of growth of the movement and actualisation of queer rights:

- providing access to human rights materials and resources
- building a sense of permanence for staff and community within the physical and social landscape
- raising awareness about “where we can be found”

⁵² Women’s Fund Georgia, VOVO,

⁵³ The Global Fund attract, leverages, and invests resources to end the epidemics of AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and includes significant funding to CSOs that represent MSM



6b Nurturing nascent queer CSOs

Several grantees described how they have used their newly owned spaces to nurture nascent queer groups and community-based organisations; owning the property removes complications of subletting. Nascent CSOs who would otherwise have nowhere to operate, have been provided hot desks,⁵⁴ and sometimes shared staff as well as premises.⁵⁵ “We act as a Nursery for other organisations” - ACCEPT

>> Building block activities

As part of nurturing nascent queer CSOs, organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of growth of the movement and actualisation of queer rights:

- providing temporary desk space to activists and fledging organisations
- sharing admin support and services
- providing mentoring and guidance

6c Implanting physical markers of identity and culture

Many grantees described how ownership of their space has empowered them to display markers of queer culture and identity. Rainbow flags are a popular choice, (even though these have been occasionally stolen)⁵⁶ as are colourful murals and artwork. **“If it’s your own building you can put up your queer symbols and be proud. We can only do this because the building is ours.”** – GENDERDOC-M

WHER in Nigeria were obliged to leave behind a mural in their rented premises but were able to decorate their new premises with the help of community artists. ACCEPT has a colourful rainbow butterfly proudly displayed on the wall of their premises that has occasionally attracted neo-Nazi graffiti; they feel that it is important to keep it as a symbol of identity and repair any damage that occurs.

The raising of the rainbow flag is seen as symbolically significant and has been employed by several CSOs at inaugurations and special events. For many, these occasions are a powerful assertion of identity and the dignity that accompanies it. **“The day we launched the centre, we put up the rainbow flag. People were weeping and crying, they said they never thought they would see such a thing in their lifetime.”** - WHER

While each of these gestures may seem inconsequential in themselves, collectively they contribute to embedding queer culture in contexts where it may previously have been invisible.

“The day we launched the centre, we put up the rainbow flag. People were weeping and crying, they said they never thought they would see such a thing in their lifetime.”

- WHER



Photo Credit: WHER (Nigeria)

54 ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, Accept

55 JFLAG shares its premises with Trans Jamaica

56 GENDERDOC-M reported the theft of a rainbow flag which actually led to constructive dialogue with neighbours.



>> Building block activities

As part of implanting physical markers of identity and culture organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of growth of the movement and actualisation of queer rights:

- displaying queer artwork and images
- installing Rainbow flags and flagpoles
- creating murals

6d Gathering and protecting collective memory

In all the countries included in the study, the journey towards equal rights for LGBTQIA* has been challenging and often dangerous. In all countries there is a story to tell. INEND in Kenya is keen to use their space to preserve queer history there “lest it be overwritten” while ACCEPT has considered establishing a queer museum on their premises.

As well as preserving an accurate record of struggle, some CSOs recognise the need to preserve the memory of those who have fallen victim to it. Trans communities have been targeted with violence more than most; in Colombia, FSM have used an outdoor part of their premises to establish a garden commemorating all those who have been victims of violent trans phobia.

>> Building block activities

As part of **gathering and protecting collective memory**, organisations have undertaken the following building block activities that have contributed to the longer-term effect of **growth of the movement and actualisation of queer rights**:

- establishing a queer museum,
- building a library of queer poetry and literature
- establishing a memorial garden for those targeted by of homo/transphobia

Potential hazards

While the majority of CSOs reported that the increased visibility and activism they enjoyed as property owners within the ecosystem was positive, a number recognised that it could bring confrontation with detractors. ACCEPT in Romania reported how during football matches, extremist right wing elements were able to target their premises (with staff sheltering in place inside). In Georgia, the Women’s fund reported how during the annual Pride march in 2021, extremist far-right groups together with Orthodox clergy, led a counter-protest that led to the ransacking of several LGBT organisation offices in the capital.

Observations on the Purchasing Process

This section shares the main observations and lessons gleaned from the various findings and effects of the property purchase process.



Varied and diverse factors leading to purchase

All the grantees that participated in this research study have embarked on their own unique journeys of purchasing a property. Whether they are in the Caribbean, West Africa or Eastern Europe, their motivation and reasons are based on diverse Push and Pull factors. Staff and community members feeling unsafe and insecure are real threats to personal and organisational wellbeing. LGBTIQIA* and human rights organisations have been targeted and experience the perpetual risk of eviction, harassment, and violence. There have been examples of arson, ransacking of premises, vandalism, theft, and desecration. When measures to increase security - cameras, alarms, raising walls and fencing - are inadequate, the organisation has been pushed to vacate and leave. For some, this has been a continual cycle. New premises have been sought in 'better' and more 'secure' neighbourhoods. Payments on rent and costs for increased security measures have spiralled upwards. For some, this represented the end of the road, where something different needed to happen.

Learning by doing

The idea of non-profit organisations in the global south purchasing their own property is hugely underdeveloped. In many instances, grantees have stumbled upon this possibility and opportunity, when in conversation with enlightened donors in the global north. While these donors have been open and more sympathetic, their approaches have been ad hoc and considered on a case-by-case basis. EWB in consultation with Dreilinden and others have developed a Due Diligence tool to ensure key questions of opportunities and risks are covered. This helps to guide the organisation to think through the multiple and diverse dimensions of the property purchase journey. Donors that are willing to disburse unrestricted funds for core costs (rent, security, maintenance), not aligned to a particular programme activity are greatly appreciated and viewed positively by the grantee. Similarly, Reserve Funds created from unspent expenditures, exchange rate gains, unexpected savings enable grantees to utilise these for the property purchase.

The challenge of finance

Purchasing a property is only possible if there are adequate finances available and for most grantees this has been challenging. Local banks have no experience of lending to new ventures that focus on social outcomes. Organisations cannot access mortgages, bonds and loans and thus rely on cash purchases and individual fundraising drives. The cohort of donors who fund property purchases is small and largely confined to public and private foundations. Construction and completion are dependent on enough funds being available, with timelines stretching from two to beyond 10 years, thus making budgeting a challenging exercise.

The importance of leadership

Leaders of LGBTIQIA* organisations are themselves members of this community. While their lived experiences add authenticity to the work, they experience higher levels of stress, trauma, and burnout. Boundaries are not always easy to manage and incorporating wellness into daily routines takes conscious and sustained effort. Many CEOs/Directors have been pioneers of putting property purchase on the agenda with their Boards. Their energies and passion then get translated into 'running the show', steering the process from the outset to completion by adding extra responsibilities and stress to their already demanding positions. Recruiting a Project Manager is a sensible proposition. However, there is a lack of trust and confidence in an outsider to understand the complexities of the task. It is also an additional cost which many organisations cannot afford.

Photo Credit: INEND (Kenya)

Observations on Effects

Financial and social benefits

The data generated by the study has been analysed using a framework that models the “Ripple effects” of property ownership that CSOs describe. Longer term effects have been clustered under six thematic areas.

While there are other possible ways to group these effects, the current themes reflect areas that are of particular interest to CSOs and their partners. An additional insight that emerges is that the first (financial stability and independence) and to a certain extent the second (more efficient and sustainable organisations) relate to financial benefits. These tend to appear early on and can be observed and measured within the organisation itself. The remaining themes speak increasingly to social benefits that emerge over a period of five years or more. Representing attitude and behavioural change within the movement and society at large, they are more challenging to observe and measure.

Effects anticipated by CSOs yet to become owners and CSOs who are already owners

The sample of CSOs interviewed was made up of those who already owned property (12) and those who were still in the process of purchasing (8). Prospective grantee owners anticipated effects focussed on themes (1) to (3) with a focus on financial stability, cost sharing, benefiting from permanence, agency over use of space, and safety. For organisations that are owners, themes (4) to (6) also began to feature. Effects contributing to areas (4) Greater integration of LGBTQ within the social landscape and (5) Growth of the movement and actualisation of queer rights were often unanticipated and came as a welcome surprise.⁵⁷

Property purchase, ownership of space and social struggle

The Terms of Reference for this assignment refers to property purchase as the focus activity undertaken by CSOs and supported by Donors. It became clear in interviews however, that effects stem from property ownership or more significantly ownership of space. In many of the countries surveyed, land and property ownership are embedded in hierarchical social systems that preclude women, people of colour, indigenous groups, as well as LGBTQIA* people. Ownership of space by LGBTQIA* persons (especially when they intersect with the groups above) challenges these norms and was seen by some CSOs as part of a wider social struggle.⁵⁸

The impact of context

The sample of grantees was drawn from a wide range of country contexts in terms of human rights for LGBTQIA*. In some countries, LGBTQIA* enjoy protection of rights under the constitution (3 CSOs in South Africa) while in others, homosexuality is punishable by prison sentences of up to ten years (7 CSOs in Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, and Zimbabwe). For all CSOs in the latter group, safety and security was both a strong push factor in the decision to purchase as well as a major beneficial effect that emerged from property ownership. For those in the former group, safety and security was still an issue but stemming from general insecurity rather than violence targeted specifically at LGBTQIA* persons.



Photo Credit: INEND (Kenya)

57 FSM in Colombia reported closer ties with CSOs supporting human rights of Indigenous Groups while Iranti reported closer relations with Government Services using their premises to access LGBTQIA* communities.

58 CDX, Iranti and FSM all commented on how their ownership of property was challenging social norms.

The opportunity to provide more effective counselling was an effect of ownership reported by CSOs in Eastern Europe. This perhaps reflects the impact of systematic social exclusion, but maybe also a greater awareness of the importance of mental health. In countries⁵⁹ with particularly hostile environments, CSOs recognised opportunities that ownership brought for creating spaces for healing.⁶⁰ This was particularly important where CSOs and activists were vigorously fighting for LGBTQIA* equality in human rights. In many countries, queer culture is not given a public space. In almost all countries surveyed, CSOs used their ownership of space to provide greater access to queer culture and the sense of identity that it affords.

The significance of feeling at home

All the CSOs interviewed spoke about the importance of “feeling at home” and the positive effect that property ownership had on this. The removal of uncertainty, a sense of permanence, and creation of a social space onto which alternative queer values could be anchored were central to the idea. The freedom to socialise with others in a safe space (physically and emotionally) was also a major component. For many grantees, these fundamentals were absent in their own homes (often shared with family) underlining the importance placed on “feeling at home”.

Property ownership as part of a journey to equal rights

In most societies, property ownership and its symbolic references are important in shaping power and influence; for government property is a representation of authority; for faith-based institutions property is a projection of values and belief; for families, property is an intergenerational symbol of status and influence. The denial of the right to ownership has also been used to suppress and control social minorities, most notably under colonial systems imposed by the global North on the global South.

While all CSOs recognised the tangible benefits of owning property (financial stability and independence) a number also saw it as part of a transformative journey to equal rights. Many felt that LGBTQIA* persons owning property challenges discriminatory norms and represents a step towards permanent presence (and ultimate acceptance) on the social landscape.

The increased visibility that accompanies ownership, was mentioned as a potential hazard by some CSOs⁶¹ while others regarded it as a form of institutional “coming out” that carried short term risks but potentially delivered long term benefits.

The range of effects that result from property purchase

While the immediate effects (1) that follow property purchase were reported consistently across the range of CSOs interviewed, opportunities for institutional development (2) that CSOs pursued, and the building blocks they employed, varied from one to another. Future studies may uncover additional opportunities for institutional development (2) together with building blocks (4), but these will likely fall under the six key thematic areas of long-term effects (3).

The framework provides a convenient way to present the findings of the evaluative study; we believe that it also has potential to be developed as part of a “how to” handbook to guide CSOs and donors through the process of property purchase and financial support for it.

Annex 3 includes some suggestions as to how the framework might be used.

“Owning property for queer people is not just about ownership, it’s reclaiming power that we have not had for a long time, it’s a small step towards being an equal and active citizen. It’s a very difficult but necessary course.”

- VOVO

59 Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, Zimbabwe.

60 VOVO in Zimbabwe supports youth who are exploring their sexual/gender identity, in what is otherwise a limited and repressive environment.

61 LBQ organisation in Asia

Developing the Framework

The pattern of ripple effects

In the previous section we have used the ripple effects framework to present the findings on the effects of property purchase. The framework itself emerged following the analysis of data and was later confirmed to share several features in common with Ripple Effects Mapping – a evaluation technique developed by the University of Minnesota. The following section briefly describes how the framework was developed.

Interviews with CSOs generated a rich body of data. In it they described their experiences of the property purchase process and the effects that they observed on individuals, the organisation, and the wider ecosystem. It became clear that the single action of purchasing a property and the ownership of space that ensued, led to a cascade of effects, analogous to the ripple effects of a stone thrown into a pond. An initial thematic analysis⁶² allowed the consultants to cluster these chains of effects under several headings (see figure 6)

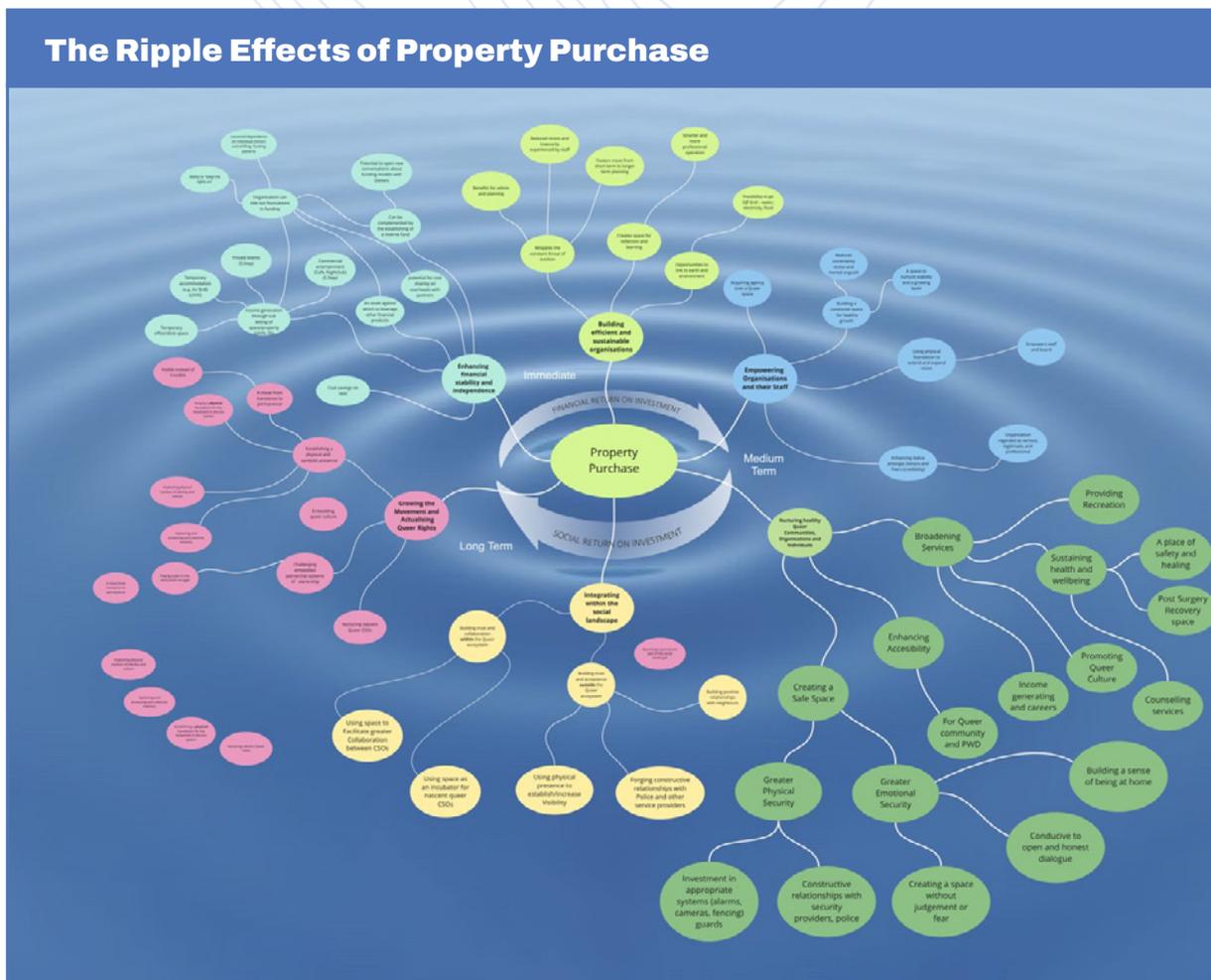


Figure 6 The initial ripple effects analysis

62 Thematic analysis is a form of analysis within qualitative research that involves identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning (or “themes”) within qualitative data.

Further analysis revealed that some of the effects were immediate and were experienced almost as soon as CSOs took ownership of their property. These acted as enablers to others that took longer to emerge and were supported by opportunities for Institutional development that CSOs embarked on shortly after purchasing their property. This led to the construction of a more sophisticated framework shown in figure 7 below.



Figure 7 Outline of the formalised ripple effects framework

Building blocks constitute a wide range of concrete activities that CSOs undertook while pursuing opportunities for institutional development. It's worth noting that many of these were only possible or meaningful after CSOs had become owners of their property. Finally, CSOs spoke about a small number of unanticipated effects some of which could be considered as hazards. These "Things to bear in mind" have been included in the framework as a separate component that relate to each of the long-term thematic effects.

Differences between the PP Ripple Effects Framework a conventional Log Frame

Conventional Log Frames have been around for some time and have found a place in the toolbox of many Donors. While widely used, the Log Frame has attracted significant criticism for how it models change and because of the power dynamics it tends to establish between Donors and grantees. Both the conventional Log Frame and the Ripple Effects Framework are founded on causal logic. We believe that there are important differences in how they model reality and how they may be used. A table that attempts to highlight some of the differences between the two is included as Annex 4.

Potential applications of the Ripple Effects Framework

Planning - CSOs considering purchasing a property

CSOs may use the framework (see Figures 5 & 7) to reflect on the broad range of effects that property purchases bring both in the immediate (1) and longer term (3). Exploring the ring of opportunities for institutional development (2) may help them identify areas that are important for them at their stage of growth. Reflecting on the building blocks for development may provide ideas for concrete activities that CSOs can implement and monitor following purchase. Reflecting on potential hazards may help CSOs identify some unanticipated effects of purchasing a property that are specific to their context and circumstances. An overall appreciation of the framework, beneficial effects of purchase, together with a risk analysis, may help CSOs to construct a strong case when approaching potential Donor for support.

Planning - Donors considering support to CSOs for property purchase

Donors may use the framework (see figures 5 & 7) to reflect on the broad range of effects that property purchases are known to bring both in the immediate (1) and longer-term (3) and reflect on how these align with their strategy of support for the sector. Exploring the ring of opportunities for institutional development (2) may help donors identify particular areas of additional support to explore with CSOs. The framework may also help to guide conversations and explore aspirations as to how property ownership will benefit LGBTQIA* CSOs and the community.

Monitoring

CSOs that have already purchased a property and would like to monitor the changes it has brought, may use the populated framework as a reflection tool to ask a series of key questions.

- What are the immediate effects that Property purchase has had on the organisation and staff?
- What opportunities for institutional development have we been able to pursue as a result of ownership? What activities have contributed to these?
- Are there further opportunities for institutional development suggested by the framework that we can pursue in future?
- What unexpected effects have resulted from property purchase?
- Where these have resulted in challenges, how have we responded to them?
- Can we devise strategies to mitigate challenges that haven't yet emerged but may come to pass?

For more formal monitoring, CSOs may identify opportunities for development and longer-term effects that they would like to track and develop suitable indicators to measure progress (many of these may be qualitative in nature).

Donor partners entering a programme of support for property purchase with CSOs may wish to collaboratively develop a monitoring framework to track the immediate and longer-term effects of their support. Both parties may use the framework to guide a discussion around aspirations of the immediate (1) and longer-term effects (3) that property purchase will have on the CSO and Ecosystem. Reflection on opportunities for development (2) may help both parties agree on what aspects of the organisation that can be strengthened as a result of property purchase and what additional support they might need to realise these. Reflection on potential Hazards may help both parties identify risks that can impact the programme of support and develop strategies to mitigate them. Finally, a discussion around measuring progress may help both parties to develop suitable performance indicators to measure progress within the identified areas of institutional development and the impact of immediate and longer-term effects.



Evaluation

CSOs and Donors that are evaluating programmes of support for purchasing property may use the framework to assist them. If the programme of support has been set up without an underlying results framework, then the outline Ripple Effects Frame (1-3) may be used to construct a Theory of Change (TOC) and generate appropriate evaluation questions.⁶³ Evaluators might use the outline framework to make sense of their data and to identify similarities and gaps with the findings of the study. A reflection on hazards may help to identify any unexpected outcomes from the programme of support.

If the programme of support has been set up using a ripple effects framework, then the anticipated immediate effects, areas for institutional development and longer-term effects could be appraised using agreed upon performance indicators.

A note on indicators for measuring change using the effects framework

If the framework is used as the basis of a programme of support that both CSOs and Donors have agreed to monitor, then a monitoring framework together with a series of performance indicators should be developed.

Most of the immediate effects, opportunities for development, and longer-term effects identified in the study represent changes in the knowledge, attitude, and behaviour (KAB) of staff, the organisation itself and the wider community. Qualitative indicators that describe change rather than count what has changed best measure the extent of these effects. Scorecards⁶⁴ can provide consistent and reliable means of measuring change in areas where a single qualitative indicator is not sufficient.

An additional way of tracking qualitative changes in KAB is to describe levels of change (this can be done by anticipating what the organisation would 1) expect, 2) like, and 3) love to see change over the period). Descriptions of what actually has changed can then refer to these aspirations and explore any factors that have enabled or hindered progress.

In specific areas of the framework such as Drop in Overhead Costs (Immediate effects), Exploring opportunities for cost saving (Opportunity for ID) and Enhanced financial stability (Longer term effect) quantitative financial data might be used to support the tracking of progress.

Building blocks that support opportunities for institutional development are effectively activities that can be monitored and tracked using both quantitative and qualitative indicators.



63 Examples of possible evaluation questions include What are some of the immediate effects following purchase? What opportunities for development have been pursued because of ownership? What building block activities have contributed to these and how effective are they? What are the longer-term changes to the organisation and the community that have resulted from ownership?)

64 A scorecard measures change across a finite number of key areas with the help of multiple-choice questions that use a Likert scale (e.g., How would you describe your performance? - Poor, Average, Good, Exceptional). The use of a Likert scale allows a numerical score to be calculated for each question together with an overall score for the card. With periodic use of the same scorecard, change in the indicator can be tracked over time.

Proposed Next Steps

1

Developing a 'How to Guide' for both CSOs interested in property purchases and donors who may wish to consider funding these projects. Based on the experiences and findings of this assignment, the How to Guide will be a practical tool elaborating each theme identified in the Ripple Effects Framework.

2

Creation of an online Property Purchase Platform, a repository for documentation and resources pertaining to property purchase (policies, videos, photographs etc.). This online platform could be developed using current content of the Miro collaboration board and could be designed to be accessible by CSOs and donors alike. The format could be periodically updated as new content is generated.

Recommendations

The recommendations are based on the experiences gleaned from the numerous conversations with grantees, donors, and other stakeholders. They are designed to take the property purchase journey to the next level, building on the work started during this phase. In many instances, they seek to formalise, professionalise, and consolidate processes.

For CSOs

1. It is important for CSOs to invest more time and resources in carrying out the groundwork, research, and due diligence prior to property purchase, in order to fully understand the associated opportunities and the risks.
2. Donors are keen to see financial models for how management of properties will be sustained into the future. For CSOs, building capacity around business planning can ensure that proposals to donors are robust and that the financial commitments are well understood by the CSOs themselves.
3. Robust engagements with staff, board and community members are important to get collective buy-in and for support.
4. Developing a concrete road map enables CSOs to monitor of activities and finances during the purchase process, and to take corrective action should things move off track.
5. Documenting all the various processes and stages are important for learning and reflections.
6. The study revealed a wide range of experience amongst CSOs that have gone through the property purchasing process, as well as creative models for sustaining ownership. While sharing the collective learning that has emerged is one of the objectives of this study, there is also potential for CSO's to learn directly from each other.

For Donors

1. Property ownership by queer CSOs has wide reaching effects for the organisation and the ecosystem. These range from greater financial stability and independence to longer term growth of the movement and potential to actualise queer rights. By supporting Queer CSOs to purchase property, donors can help sustain emerging organisations, nurture healthier and safer queer communities and provide a foundation for wider social change.
2. If donor funds and budget lines are substantially increased for property purchases, it may merit identifying dedicated personnel to manage such a portfolio within the donor organisation, enabling in-house expertise to be developed.
3. Donors advocating for greater support for property purchase could benefit from developing a clear strategy concerning how to support CSOs develop and use a Reserve Fund. Allowing unspent funds, at the end of a project or financial year to bolster the CSOs Reserve Fund is one concrete example. Similarly having more funds allocated towards General Support should be considered.

On the use of the Ripple Effects Framework

1. The ripple effects framework has been a useful way to model the change that occurs following property purchase and to present the findings of the evaluative study. It is innovative in that it models change as a divergent process (a single event triggers multiple immediate effects, creates opportunities for development leading over time to longer term benefits).
2. Testing the REF with a select number of grantees, if possible, through face-to-face interaction would help to refine the framework and test out some of its practical applications.

Annexes

Annex 1 – List of grantees interviewed

Region &W Name of Organisation	Country / Organisation Base	Year of formation	Interviewees	Organisational Focus	Stage of purchase	Website
Latin America and the Caribbean						
Fundacion Santa Maria	Colombia		Deborah Skenassy	Trans. and GN Div.	Completed	www.sfcolombia.org
Equality for All Foundation Jamaica (JFLAG)	Jamaica	1998	Glenroy Murray	LGBT	In process	www.equalityjamaica.org
GuyBow	Guyana	1999	Col McEwan Shifanie Harilall	LBQ Wmn.	In process	www.guybowfoundation.org
Organizando Trans Diversidades (OTD)	Chile	2015	Michel Riquelme Kris Cordova	Trans. and GN Div.	In process	www.otdchile.org
Eastern Europe						
Accept	Romania	1995	Andrea Nastasa Adrian Coman	LGBT	Completed	www.acceptromania.ro
GENDERDOC-M Moldova	Moldova	2000	Max Anghemichean Anastesiia Danilova	LGBT+	Completed	www.gdm.md
Single Step Foundation	Bulgaria	2016	Ivan Dimov	LGBTIQ	Completed	www.singlestep.bg
Women's Fund Georgia	Georgia	2005	Salome Chagelishvili Nana Pantsulaia	Fem.Wmn.	In process	www.womenfundgeorgia.org
Africa						
UHAI - East African Sexual Health & Rights Initiative	Kenya	2008	Irene Moloney Mukami Marete	LGBTI, Sex & GN Min. & Sex Wkrs.	Completed	www.uhai-eashri.org

Annex 1 – List of grantees interviewed

Africa						
Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum (HRAPF)	Uganda	2008	Adrian Jjuuko	Marg. Ppl.	Completed	www.hrapf.org
Initiative for Equality and Non-Discrimination (INEND)	Kenya	2015	Esther Adhiambo Melody Njuki Alouch Ochola Rose Atieno	LBQ. and GN. Min.	In Process	www.inend.org
Gender Dynamix (GDX)	South Africa	2005	Liberty Matthyse	Trans. and GN Div.	In process	www.genderdynamix.org.za
Iranti	South Africa	2012	Jabu Pereira Zikhona Gqozo	LTI	Completed	www.iranti.org.za
Rosendal Healing Centre	South Africa		Jabu Pereira	LTI	In process	
The Other Foundation (TOF)	South Africa	2008	Neville Gabriel	LGBTIQ	In process	www.theotherfoundation.org
Urgent Action Fund Africa (UAF-Africa)	Kenya	2001	Ndana Bofu-Tawamba Masa Amir	Fem. & Trans. Wmn.	In process	www.uaf-africa.org
Voice of the Voiceless (VOVO)	Zimbabwe	2013	Caroline Mudzengi Memory Mpofu	LBQT Wmn.	Completed	www.vovozimbabwe.org
Women's Health and Equal Rights Initiative (WHER)	Nigeria	2011	Akudo Oguaghamba	LBQ Wmn.	Completed	www.whernigeria.org
Central and Southeast Asia						
ASEAN SOGIE Caucus	Philippines	2016	Ryan Sylverio	LGBTIQ	Completed	www.aseansogiecaucus.org
LBQ organisation in Asia				LBQ Wmn.	Completed	

Annex 2 – List of donors interviewed

Foundation Name	Interviewees	Website
Arcus Foundation	Allie Jernow, Adrian Coman	www.arcusfoundation.org
Dreilinden	Ise Bosch, Stefan Bollier, Claudia Bollwinkell	www.dreilinden.org/eng/en_index.html
Equality Without Borders	Julie Dorf	www.tides.org/story/equality-without-borders-fund/
OSF	Maxim Anmeghichean	www.opensocietyfoundations.org/
Wellspring	Addison Smith	www.wpfund.org

Annex 4 – Difference between the Ripple Effects Framework and a Logical Framework

Logical Framework	PP Ripple Effects Framework
Convergent - multiple prescribed activities cascade to fewer outputs, outcomes, and a single impact.	Divergent - a single event (property purchase) triggers multiple immediate effects, creates opportunities for development leading over time to longer term benefits.
Linear – direct cause and effect logic links specific activities to outputs, outcomes, and impact in a precise sequence.	Non-Linear - observation suggests that PP triggers a range of immediate effects that give rise to multiple opportunities for institutional development (ID). While there are multiple longer term benefits, there is no singular prescribed route to these.
Prescriptive - once constructed, log frames tend to remain fixed and to be regarded as inflexible.	Exploratory - components of the REF that are most relevant to CSOs, and their context may change over time. Opportunities for ID and building blocks can be expanded depending on the context.
Tend to be designed for purposes of reporting and accountability to Donors.	The REP has emerged from a consultative process with CSOs. It is designed to be used by CSOs for reflection and learning as well as reporting to BoG and Donors.
Can lead to blind spots around unintended outcomes that are not included in the Log frame.	A diverse range of long-term effects provides greater opportunity to spot unexpected change and explore how it might be linked (or not) to PP.
Focus on a single impact leads frequently to challenges in demonstrating attribution between Activities and Impact.	An appreciation of multiple potential effects that may mature at different times, counteracts conventional preoccupation with demonstrating direct attribution between PP and Impact.
Log frames embody a rational linear logic associated with things rather than people. ⁶⁵	The emergent nature of the Ripple Effect framework is considered to be more representative of complex social systems .
Oriented towards control that discourages innovation and learning and can reinforce unequal power relations between Donors and CSOs.	Orientated towards discovery and exploration where CSOs can set the pace and direction of development and reporting.

65 Adapted from Robert Chambers and Jethro Pettit Shifting Power to Make a Difference in "Inclusive Aid: Changing power and relationships in international development" by Leslie Groves and Rachel Hinton, (2004) Earthscan, London

Annex 6 – Due diligence document

The document below has been supplied courtesy of Equality without Borders. While the list of questions is comprehensive, not all questions will be relevant in each context.

Guidance and Due Diligence for Purchasing Property for LGBT NGOs (as of November 8, 2022)

The purpose of this guidance note is to help LGBTI+ NGOs think through some of the key questions related to the possible purchase of a building or another large asset for their organisation's sustainability. It is also intended to raise questions, which could help address and mitigate risk associated with such a large purchase for the funders. Unlike a more typical grant, purchasing a permanent home or another large asset has both big rewards and potentially big pitfalls associated. This guidance note is intended to support the partnership between the group and the funders to ensure a safe and successful set of transactions, and to truly help propel the organisation into greater sustainability for the foreseeable future.

A. Developing a Real Estate Plan

Initial Questionnaire for organisation:

1. What exactly are you looking to purchase?
2. What will be the primary purpose of this space?
3. In what name will the official deed be?
4. In what neighbourhoods are you considering and why?
5. What is the price range you are looking at?
6. Are you considering a freehold or leasehold property? What are the implications for your organisation for each option? If a leasehold, what is the process for extending the leasehold on expiry?
7. Do you have a real estate professional(s) to help look and manage the deal? Do you need a lawyer to help the organisation with documents and formalising decisions related to the purchase? How do they work in your country – do all realtors have the same access to properties for sale, or are the listings specific to the company?
8. What are the options and pros/cons to each option?
9. Who is making the procurement decision(s) in your organisation for real estate agent, property purchase, and any additional related vendor selections such as a contractor for renovations or fixes, solar power, security assessment and installations, etc.? Do you have a procurement policy we could see?
10. Are there special considerations in the process of selecting a property related to security beyond budget? If the building is identified as an LGBT-related space, will that cause particular security concerns? How will that be addressed? Will you be open about the nature of the organisation and work with your neighbours for example? Do you have a written security plan and if so, may we see it?
11. How will the organisation afford the on-going maintenance and utilities costs for the building? How would this actually work in terms of functioning with current staff and organisational plans?
12. Are you able to build reserves for larger works in the future (e.g., new bathroom, new flooring, etc.)?
13. Beyond the basic expenses of upkeep and utilities, how do you see such a major asset fitting into your budget and strategic plans over time? What are the pros and cons of owning a property vs renting?
14. Do you plan on taking out any insurance on the property (e.g., fire, water damage, etc.)? Do you know how much it will cost to insure the property? Have you budgeted for the costs of the insurance?

15. If the organisation were to change in purpose, or stop existing for any reason, what would happen to the building? Do you have a lawyer to support this purchase, ownership, and succession planning, and/or any additional legal work needed for the organisation to own the property from an organisational perspective?
16. Do you have any other funding options for this plan in addition to Equality Without Borders money?
17. Is the board and staff and other stakeholders supportive of this idea? What kind of consultations have you made? What concerns arose? What ideas came up?
18. Once a property is identified and agreed upon, who will negotiate the price and the contracts?
19. Provide a detailed budget for the building? Including furnishings, security, etc.
20. What are the long-term benefits to your community and to your organisational mission that you're hoping to achieve by making this purchase?

B. Policy Requirements:

- Procurement Policy: who makes decisions about which purchases and what kind of process for selection of attorney, real estate broker, contractor/construction, etc. Above what sums of money requires multiple bids? Which members of staff and board are involved in which decisions?
- Financial Policies
- Security assessment and plan

C. Once Property is Identified for Purchase:

1. Please report on or share all property inspections:
 - Pest/Termite
 - Structural
 - Renovations – quotes for work
2. Legal/Escrow plan
 - How is the deed or ownership of the property legally transferred in your country? What is the process and who will be doing that on behalf of your organisation?
3. What are your renovation and sustainability plans for this particular space?
 - Solar power or water sources?
 - Will the property be used for any type of shelter? If so, what is your experience and plans for that?
 - Will you use the property for any income possibilities for organisation and/or members– social enterprise or livelihoods options for stakeholders? Rental of conference/retreat space?
 - Will you use the property for any garden or food production?
 - Do you have any plans for artwork on or for space?

D. Risk Analysis

- What are the key financial risks associated with the asset purchase? How do you plan to mitigate these risks?
- How do you plan to manage the increased visibility that comes with owning a property? What measures can be taken to ensure the safety of your staff and visitors to the premises?
- Would an asset purchase have any effect on the ecosystem/environment your organisation is operating in? How would an asset purchase be perceived by other organisations, partners, and other stakeholders (friendly and hostile)? How would the dynamics within the ecosystem change?
- Do you expect climate change to impact your work in the short-/medium-/long-term? Do you expect any changes in terms of community organising and the need for owning your own space? How do the type of properties you envisage acquiring meet these needs?

E. Longer-term Impact:

- How will this contribute to the longer-term sustainability of your organisation?
- Do you have a specific need to be in a certain location? What is your strategy if that requirement changes over time (due to changes in the neighbourhood for example)?
- If you were to sell the property at a later point and generate capital gains, what would happen with that money? What are the decision making processes? How would you make sure the money is used in accordance with the organisation's mission?
- Should this funding come through, will you be willing to participate in a longer-term impact evaluation 2, 5 or even 10 years later?