

Introduction

LGBTIQ refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya face significant challenges. Same-sex relationships are illegal and often not socially accepted. Additionally, Kenya has an “encampment policy” requiring refugees to reside within refugee camps. In the camps, LGBTIQ asylum seekers are subject to extreme discrimination and violence and can have difficulties going about their social and economic lives.

ORAM works with LGBTIQ refugees and asylum seekers who reside in Nairobi’s metropolitan urban areas, Kalobeyei settlement, and Kakuma Refugee Camp.

In Kenya, ORAM supports LGBTIQ refugees and asylum seekers to achieve self-sufficiency and become resilient in their new homes. Through training, capacity building, mentoring and seed funding, ORAM provides LGBTIQ asylum seekers in Kenya with the tools to generate income to support themselves and the community.

History

ORAM began our programs in Kenya in 2019, providing economic empowerment opportunities through skills training and seed funding to an LGBTIQ refugee-led soap-making business in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

Subsequently, ORAM began working with LGBTIQ refugees in Nairobi in 2019, supporting community-based organizations (CBOs). ORAM provided skills training in poultry rearing, business marketing, and networking. After completing the skills training, ORAM provided seed funding for trainees to start their poultry businesses.

In the last four years, we have adapted our approach to better help queer refugees achieve positive results from trainings courses and business management.

Program Initiatives

Skills & vocational training

ORAM is proud to provide **in-depth job skills and/or vocational training** through partnering with reliable training institutions. On average, the trainees will participate in the various training courses for six months.

To enhance the resilience of LGBTIQ refugees, ORAM launched a **Training of Trainers (ToT) program** in Kenya. The ToT program provides mentorship on small business management



Since 2021...

550

LGBTIQ refugees & asylum seekers have been aided



Received livelihood training



Received seed funding to start or grow their business

Since 2022...



LGBTIQ refugees received digital skills training

Since 2023...



142 participated in kitchen gardening training

and financial literacy to LGBTIQ refugees, equipping them to coach other queer refugee entrepreneurs at different stages of their business.

Entrepreneurship

After successful completion of job skills or vocational training, LGBTIQ refugees and asylum seekers are eligible to apply for **seed funding** to start their own business venture.

ORAM staff regularly visit the LGBTIQ refugee-owned businesses we support to provide advice and resources and help ensure the business' success. We also provide **business training sessions** facilitated by trainers.

Digital skills training

For LGBTIQ refugees looking to access alternative employment opportunities, ORAM operates a **Digital Learning Center (DLC)**. The DLC is a digital hub in Nairobi that provides access to computers and digital skills training to help trainees source and secure online freelance job opportunities.

Capacity building

ORAM is committed to providing LGBTIQ refugees with the skills and resources to support their fellow queer refugees and respond to emergencies. ORAM facilitates **capacity building** activities for LGBTIQ refugee community leaders to help them successfully lead members of community-based organizations toward self-sufficiency.

Program Partners

The success of ORAM's programs in Kenya is thanks in part to our committed local partners, many of whom are members of the LGBTIQ refugee community themselves.

ORAM is committed to amplifying LGBTIQ refugee voices and ensuring that those with lived experiences are directly included when creating, implementing, and assessing our projects. We partner with several **LGBTIQ refugee-led community based organizations (CBOs)** throughout Kenya. A great example of a successful partnership is Team No Sleep (TNS), whose members participate in ORAM's livelihoods program, provide critical services to the community in Nairobi, and manage our Digital Learning Center.

To best provide well-rounded services to LGBTIQ refugees and asylum seekers, we partner with larger NGOs and INGOs in Kenya, such as the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**, **HIAS**, and the **International Rescue Committee (IRC)**. Partnerships with NGOs and INGOs help LGBTIQ refugees access crucial services and build the capacity of these larger organizations to address the unique needs of queer refugees in their mainstream programming.