

BACKGROUND:

An Activist's Guide to the Yogyakarta Principles

Q. What are the Yogyakarta Principles?

The Yogyakarta Principles (www.yogyakartaprinciples.org) are a set of principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity. The Principles affirm binding international legal standards with which all States must comply. They promise a different future where all people born free and equal in dignity and rights can fulfil that precious birthright.

Q. What is the Activist's Guide?

The Activist's Guide is a toolkit, designed to facilitate a deeper understanding of the Yogyakarta Principles and to encourage their use. We hope the Guide will encourage a further exploration of the Principles, and the international human rights law on which they are based. It includes many exciting examples of successful community activism based on the Yogyakarta Principles, and will hopefully inspire further creative advocacy in regions around the world.

Q. How is the Guide structured?

There are four sections to the Guide:

- ◇ Section 1 ("*Overview and Context*") gives an overview of what the Principles are, and provides contextual information about legal standards relating to sexual orientation and gender identity at the international and regional levels.
- ◇ Section 2 ("*The Yogyakarta Principles Up Close*") examines the content of the Principles and explores key themes and issues in more detail.
- ◇ Section 3 ("*The Yogyakarta Principles in Action*") presents case studies illustrating the impact of the Principles in a number of different areas: national legal decisions, policy changes, informing better health service delivery, empowering activists, and so on.
- ◇ Section 4 ("*Applying the Yogyakarta Principles*") suggests strategies for further engagement with the Principles, to carry them forward in future advocacy.

Q. How can the Guide be used?

The Guide can be used to encourage the promotion of the Yogyakarta Principles among policy makers and politicians, decision makers, human rights commissions and the general population, as well as among human rights defenders and rights-holders. Activists – particularly LGBTI activists, but including the wider community of human rights activists – are at the centre of these initiatives.

Q. How have the Yogyakarta Principles been used?

The Activist's Guide demonstrates how the Yogyakarta Principles have been used to challenge oppressive legal standards in India, Nepal, the Netherlands and China; to develop new government policy in Brazil, Belize, Sweden and Colombia; to educate the public, and to build a movement by equipping LGBTI people about their rights under international law, for example, in opposition to "curative" rape in South Africa, or providing training for lesbians and transgender women in Lebanon.

Q. In what languages is the Activist's Guide available?

The Guide is currently available in English and Spanish.

Q. How do I get a copy?

You can order copies of both the Yogyakarta Principles and the Activist's Guide through the online request forms at <http://ypinaction.org/> and www.yogyakartaprinciples.org.

Q. Where do we go from here?

A new tracking website (<http://ypinaction.org/>) provides information on how the Principles are being used, as well as translations of the Principles. The Activist's Guide is a living document, in constant growth. On this website you can read new stories of activism, and contribute your own. You can also download a digital version of the Guide, or order printed copies of both the Yogyakarta Principles and the Activist's Guide. The potential uses of the Yogyakarta Principles are limited only by the creativity and resourcefulness of the activists in whose hands they now rest. We look forward to hearing more inspiring examples of how activists are using the Yogyakarta Principles to promote equality and justice for LGBTI people in communities large and small around the world!