



**F&M GLOBAL
BAROMETERS®**

Country Conditions Analysis of LGBTQI+ Human Rights in Nigeria

Prepared by the F&M Global Barometers

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Introduction

The Franklin & Marshall Global Barometers® (FMGB) have four primary products: the F&M Global Barometer of Unified LGBT Rights™ (GBUR), the F&M Global Barometer of Gay Rights® (GBGR), the F&M Global Barometer of Transgender Rights™ (GBTR), and the F&M Global Barometers LGBTQI+ Perception Index™ (GBPI).

The GBGR and the GBTR track 27 and 19 items, respectively, to measure state and societal levels of persecution or protection of sexual orientation and gender identity minorities in 204 countries and territories. Both barometers assess five dimensions: *de facto* and *de jure* protections, the sanction or suppression of LGBTQ+ advocacy, socio-economic rights, and societal persecution of LGBTQ+ persons. The GBUR combines the items from the GBGR and GBTR (41) into a single score that reflects a comprehensive metric of the state of LGBT human rights.

The GBPI survey measures the lived human rights experiences of LGBTQI+ people worldwide through six questions on safety, acceptance, and experiences with discrimination and violence.

Methodology

The F&M Global Barometers (FMGB) combine a quantitative research design with a qualitative, real-world perspective. Fundamental principles of human rights inform the items on the GBUR/GBGR/GBTR, which are operationalized using binary variables (1 or 0). Each item in the three barometers is weighted equally. A country will receive a one (1) if evidence supports the item in the affirmative and a zero (0) if in the negative. For example, the item “No death penalty for sexual orientation” would receive a one if there is no death penalty for sexual orientation; but if the country has the death penalty for sexual orientation, it would receive a zero.

Grades are calculated by summing the raw score for a particular year. The highest possible score on the **GBUR**, **GBGR**, and **GBTR** is 41/41, 27/27, and 19/19, respectively, and the lowest possible score is 0/41, 0/27, or 0/19. The raw score is then converted to a percentage score (0–100%) and assigned a letter grade (A–F) where 100 percent (A) is the most positive and zero percent (F) is the most negative (see below, **Figure 1**).

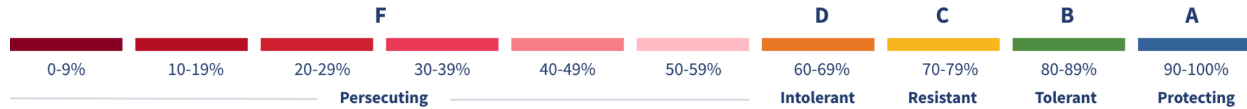


Figure 1. FMGB Grading Scale

GBUR/GBGR/GBTR data are collected and reviewed through a process of double-blind coding. A primary coder collects all of the sources and citations and scores each item accordingly, and then a second coder applies their own score based on the sources and citations provided by the first coder. If any discrepancies arise, the principal investigator acts as the third reviewer. This protocol expedites the review process and reduces the impact of human error or bias.

The GBUR/GBGR/GBTR comprise five dimensions:

The **De Jure Protections (DJ)** dimension measures the extent to which a country's constitution and laws protect the fundamental human rights of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) minorities. While the a priori function of the state is to protect its citizens, states may discriminate in carrying out this responsibility by criminalizing SOGI minorities and denying them the right to serve in the military or to marry, for example.

The **De Facto Protections (DF)** dimension considers the ability of a state to implement laws that ensure the protection of SOGI minorities. It is assumed that states that do not criminalize SOGI minorities will also provide legal protections, such as freedom from arbitrary arrest or the right to a fair trial. However, negative societal attitudes and the influence of anti-LGBT+ political elites may circumvent protective laws, creating conditions where SOGI minorities are deprived of legal protections.

The **LGBT Rights Advocacy (RA)** dimension captures state sanction or suppression of SOGI minorities' attempts to organize visibly in society. Effective LGBT organization is necessary to further SOGI human rights. States, with their monopoly on legitimate force, may use police forces to protect or impede SOGI minorities' freedom of association. Because most LGBT organizations advocate for both the LGB and transgender communities, the GBTR duplicates the scores from the GBGR LGBT Rights Advocacy dimension.

The **Socio-Economic Rights (SER)** dimension is based on the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), signaling SOGI minorities' ability to seek and enjoy socio-economic opportunities without discrimination. Anti-discrimination laws in employment and in

access to housing and healthcare are baseline measures of a state’s commitment to protecting SOGI socio-economic rights.

The **Societal Persecution (SP)** dimension gauges whether SOGI minorities are targeted for violence or murder based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. It measures the ability of SOGI minorities to seek redress from state authorities in cases of unequal treatment or discriminatory violence. Analysis of this dimension will include commentary on the state’s ability to restore justice in such cases.

Complementing the GBUR/GBGR/GBTR, the GBPI is a six-question survey designed to measure LGBTQI+ individuals’ experiences with safety, acceptance, discrimination, and violence. Respondents complete the survey online and select answers on a Likert scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).

The survey also asks respondents demographic questions about their country of residence in the past 12 months, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics, urban, rural, or suburban location, and age. Respondents have the option to skip any questions and to select multiple sexual orientations and gender identities. The survey adheres to human subjects guidelines and was approved by Franklin & Marshall College’s Institutional Review Board.

Each country’s GBPI score is calculated by determining the average score for each of the six questions and then taking the average of those averages. Then, this score is converted into a percentage and assigned a letter grade (A–F), where 100% (A) is the most protective and 0% (F) is the least protective. The GBPI employs the same grading scale as the GBUR/GBGR/GBTR (see above, **Figure 1**).

GBUR/GBGR/GBTR Data on Nigeria

The most recent data available on Nigeria for the GBUR, GBGR, and GBTR are from 2024 [1]. In 2024, Nigeria’s GBUR score was an **F-Persecuting** with a grade of **five percent**. The GBGR and GBTR were also graded as **F-Persecuting** with scores of seven percent and five percent, respectively. **Table 1**, below, shows the scores for the GBUR, GBGR, and GBTR from 2011 to 2024. Data on Nigeria and other countries in the world can be found on the F&M Global Barometers’ website: <https://www.fandmglobalbarometers.org/countries/Nigeria/>.

Table 1. GBUR/GBGR/GBTR 2011–2024 - Scores for Nigeria

Country	Year	GBUR Score	GBUR Tolerance Cat	GBGR Score	GBGR Tolerance Cat	GBTR Score	GBTR Tolerance Cat
Nigeria	2011	7%	F - Persecuting	7%	F - Persecuting	11%	F - Persecuting
Nigeria	2012	7%	F - Persecuting	7%	F - Persecuting	11%	F - Persecuting

Country	Year	GBUR Score	GBUR Tolerance Cat	GBGR Score	GBGR Tolerance Cat	GBTR Score	GBTR Tolerance Cat
Nigeria	2013	7%	F - Persecuting	7%	F - Persecuting	11%	F - Persecuting
Nigeria	2014	7%	F - Persecuting	7%	F - Persecuting	11%	F - Persecuting
Nigeria	2015	5%	F - Persecuting	4%	F - Persecuting	11%	F - Persecuting
Nigeria	2016	5%	F - Persecuting	4%	F - Persecuting	11%	F - Persecuting
Nigeria	2017	7%	F - Persecuting	7%	F - Persecuting	11%	F - Persecuting
Nigeria	2018	7%	F - Persecuting	7%	F - Persecuting	11%	F - Persecuting
Nigeria	2019	7%	F - Persecuting	7%	F - Persecuting	11%	F - Persecuting
Nigeria	2020	5%	F - Persecuting	4%	F - Persecuting	11%	F - Persecuting
Nigeria	2021	5%	F - Persecuting	4%	F - Persecuting	11%	F - Persecuting
Nigeria	2022	7%	F - Persecuting	7%	F - Persecuting	11%	F - Persecuting
Nigeria	2023	7%	F - Persecuting	7%	F - Persecuting	11%	F - Persecuting
Nigeria	2024	5%	F - Persecuting	7%	F - Persecuting	5%	F - Persecuting

It is important to note that the GBUR/GBGR/GBTR take a holistic approach in measuring how protective or persecuting a country is toward LGBT people. While fluctuating over the years, the GBUR and GBTR both show a net decline in scores from 2011 to 2024. Every score from every recorded year corresponds to failing grades; thus, the overall GBUR, GBGR, and GBTR scores for Nigeria document a government and a society which are failing to protect its LGBT population. Same-sex relations and gender expression remain criminalized in Nigeria, with punishments ranging from monetary fines to imprisonment of 14 years and, in some states, the death penalty.¹ Operating or participating in an LGBT organization is also punishable by a 10-year prison sentence. Together, these laws inhibit fundamental freedoms of association and existence.

GBUR, GBGR, and GBTR scores depict the lack of state and societal protections in Nigeria for LGBT people. To gather insight into the lived experiences of LGBT people, the F&M GBPI surveys individuals to measure their experiences in the country.

¹ While Nigeria's Criminal Code Act (2004) dictates a national punishment cap of 14 years' imprisonment for consensual same-sex relations, states adopting Sharia penal codes (more common in northern Nigeria) also criminalize gender expression and may prescribe the death penalty for same-sex relations.

F&M Global Barometers LGBTQI+ Perception Index (GBPI)

Data discussed below are based on the 2024 F&M Global Barometers LGBTQI+ Perception Index (GBPI) [2]. The GBPI examines six questions focused on safety; safety in gathering; acceptance; experiences with discrimination; fear of arrest, harassment or blackmail by security forces; and the likelihood of being a victim of violence (see below, **Table 2**, for a complete list of questions). The global survey was live from August 19, 2024 to December 19, 2024.

Table 2. 2024 GBPI Survey Questions

Question 1 (Safety): How safe do you feel living as a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person in your country?

Question 2 (Safety in Gathering): How safe do you feel gathering with other lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex people in public?

Question 3 (Acceptance): How accepted do you feel as a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person by your society?

Question 4 (Discrimination): How frequently have you experienced discrimination in your day-to-day life because you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person?

Question 5 (Fear of Police): How fearful are you of being arrested, harassed, or blackmailed by security forces/police because you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person?

Question 6 (Violence): How likely are you to be a victim of violence because you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person?

Visibility Question: Do you share with others that you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person?

Intersex Question: To your knowledge, were you subjected to harmful medical practices (including medically unnecessary surgeries) as a child without your consent?

The total number of respondents from Nigeria on the 2024 GBPI was **146**. The overall GBPI score for Nigeria in 2024 was **21 percent**, starkly contrasting the global average of 57 percent; as such, the legislative landscape and the lived experiences of LGBT+ people in Nigeria both reflect a persecutory environment. The human rights experiences for LGBTQI+ Nigerians can further be distilled by

examining the GBPI responses by individual question. The Likert scale depicted in **Figure 2** (below) summarizes the responses by question, from Q1 to Q6. Scores from responses on the survey are converted to a percentage, which corresponds to a letter grade (A–F) following the GBUR/GBGR/GBTR and GBPI grading scale (see **Figure 1**).

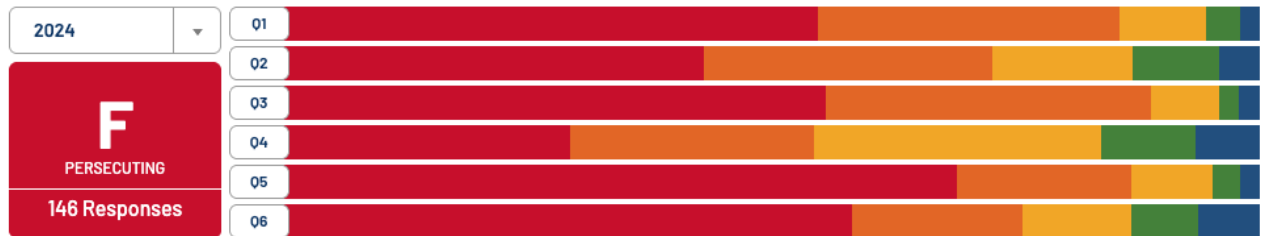


Figure 2. 2024 GBPI - Nigeria - Summary Responses by Question

For Question 1, gauging safety, **86 percent** of LGBTQI+ respondents felt very unsafe or unsafe, while only **five percent** felt safe or very safe living as a member of the LGBTQI+ community in Nigeria. **Nine percent** of survey respondents reported feeling somewhat safe (see below, **Figure 3**).



Figure 3. Question 1: How safe do you feel living as a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person in your country?

For Question 2, gauging safety in gathering, **72 percent** of LGBTQI+ respondents felt very unsafe or unsafe, while **13 percent** felt safe or very safe gathering with other LGBTQI+ people in public. **Fourteen** percent of individuals felt somewhat safe (see below, **Figure 4**).

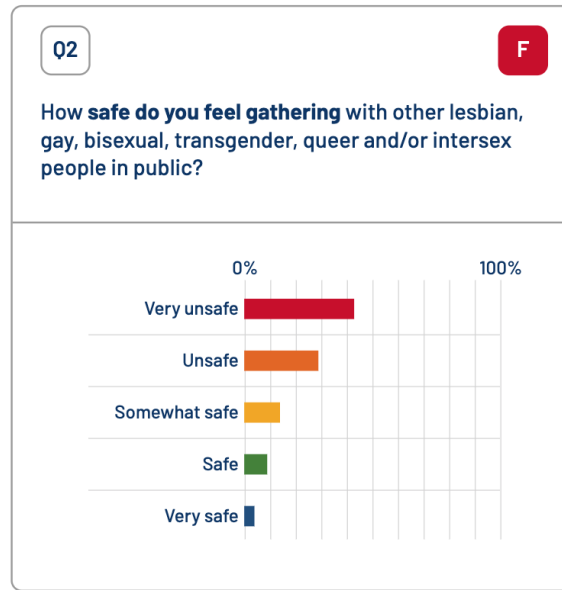


Figure 4. Question 2: How safe do you feel gathering with other lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex people in public?

For Question 3, gauging societal acceptance, **89 percent** of LGBTQI+ respondents never or rarely felt accepted, while only **four percent** mostly or always felt accepted by Nigerian society. **Seven percent** felt somewhat accepted (see below, **Figure 5**).



Figure 5. Question 3: How accepted do you feel as a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person by your society?

For Question 4, **54 percent** of LGBTQI+ respondents always or frequently experienced discrimination in their day-to-day life because of their LGBTQI+ identity, while **17 percent** indicated that they rarely or never experienced discrimination. **Twenty-nine percent** sometimes experienced discrimination (see below, **Figure 6**).

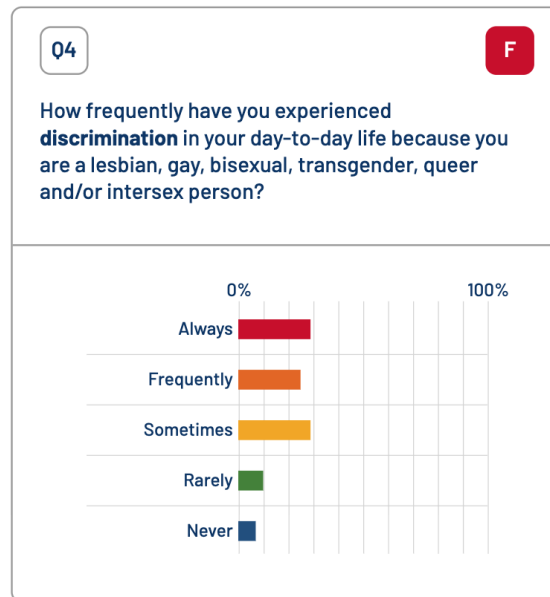


Figure 6. Question 4: How frequently have you experienced discrimination in your day-to-day life because you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person?

For Question 5, **87 percent** of LGBTQI+ respondents were very fearful or fearful of being arrested, harassed or blackmailed by security forces/police because of their LGBTQI+ identity, while only **five percent** were not fearful or not at all fearful. **Eight percent** were somewhat fearful (see below, **Figure 7**).

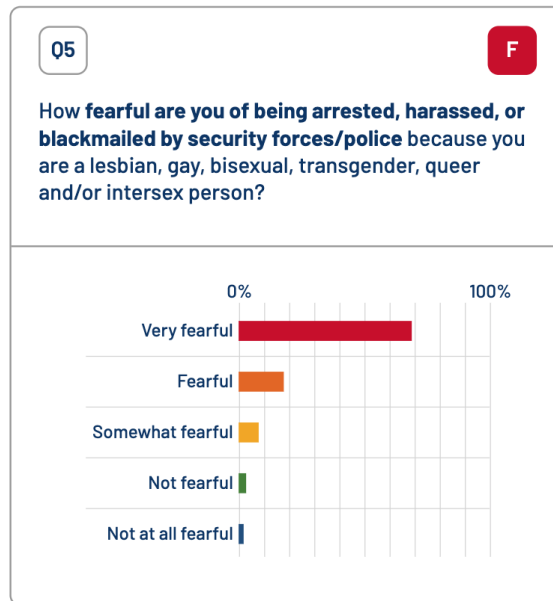


Figure 7. Question 5: How fearful are you of being arrested, harassed, or blackmailed by security forces/police because you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person?

And finally, for Question 6, **75 percent** of LGBTQI+ respondents indicated that they were very likely or likely to be a victim of violence because of their LGBTQI+ identity. **Thirteen percent** indicated that they were unlikely or very unlikely to be victims of violence, while **11 percent** indicated that they were somewhat likely to be victims of violence (see below, **Figure 8**).



Figure 8. Question 6: How likely are you to be a victim of violence because you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or intersex person?

Visibility

It is also important to note how comfortable individual members of the LGBTQI+ community in Nigeria felt about disclosing their LGBTQI+ identity, as levels of identity visibility may impact how safe an individual is or how likely they are to experience discrimination from the state and in society. High rates of identity visibility within a country may indicate that individuals feel safe disclosing their identity to others, while low levels of visibility may indicate that legal and societal conditions are unconducive to sharing LGBT+ identity status.

Respondents to the 2024 GBPI were asked to comment on whether they shared with others that they were a member of the LGBTQI+ community. The results in **Table 3**, below, indicate that **64 percent** of respondents **never or rarely** shared their LGBTQI+ identity with others, while only **10 percent** often or always shared their LGBTQI+ identity with others.

Table 3. 2024 GBPI - Nigeria - Visibility of Respondents

Breakdown by Visibility	# of respondents	Visibility by %
Never	41	29%
Rarely	50	35%
Sometimes	38	26%
Often	5	3%
Always	10	7%
Total Respondents	144	100%

Voices on the Ground

Many GBPI survey respondents from Nigeria commented on their experiences as LGBT+ individuals. One anonymous respondent, self-identified as a gay, non-binary individual between the ages of 36 and 55 and residing in a city, reflected on the ways in which society limits freedoms of expression: “[I] just wish to be in a safe country where I can express my feelings for whom I love...It’s very difficult seeing someone you love and can’t do anything because of the fear of society.”

The inherent lack of safety and instability that accompany LGBT+ identities in Nigeria was elaborated upon by another gay participant of the GBPI, aged 26–35, residing in a city: “The enforcement of the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act (SSMPA) and other discriminatory laws in Nigeria have significantly exacerbated the vulnerability of LGBTQI+ individuals...The hostile legal and social environment has led to severe consequences, including increased incidents of violence, loss of lives, and forced displacement. Many LGBTQI+ individuals have been evicted from their homes or faced homelessness due to community ostracization and family rejection. The fear of exposure and subsequent harm has further prevented many from seeking help or reporting crimes committed against them.

Organizations working to support LGBTQI+ communities are also severely impacted. They often operate under precarious conditions and are frequently targeted by mobs and anti-LGBTQI+ groups. As a result, these organizations are forced to adopt security measures and, in some cases, relocate their offices multiple times to avoid detection. This constant threat to safety hinders their ability to provide crucial

services, such as HIV/AIDS prevention, mental health support, and emergency shelter, leaving the community underserved and at greater risk.”

The above respondent identified a widespread issue frequently impacting LGBT+ individuals in Nigeria: violence without recourse. Colloquially dubbed “kito,” a specific variety of blackmail disproportionately impacting the LGBT+ community involves perpetrators posing as romantic interests, usually on dating or other social platforms, only to extort LGBT+ people. Kito often involves kidnapping and abuse, both physical and verbal. The criminalization of LGBT+ identities results in very few LGBT+ individuals being willing to testify in court against their aggressors, for fear that they themselves will be prosecuted. Consequently, very few perpetrators of kito are held accountable for their actions [3].

The 2024 GBPI reveals that a majority of LGBT+ individuals feel unsafe and unable to disclose their identities due to a discriminatory legal atmosphere and hostile societal conditions. Results from question one and the question on identity visibility (see **Figure 3** and **Table 3**, above) support this conclusion, as do comments disclosed from individuals attesting to widespread fear and violence experienced by LGBT+ individuals in Nigeria.

Conclusions

The Nigerian government and society fail to protect its LGBT+ community. Both the state and society are persecutory toward members of the LBGT+ community. These conclusions are supported primarily by evidence from the F&M Global Barometers’ 2024 data.

Notes

[1] F&M Global Barometers, *F&M Global Barometer of Unified LGBT Rights, 2011-2024*, Dataset, Version 4, 2026, F&M Global Barometers, <https://www.fandmglobalbarometers.org/gbur-results>.

[2] F&M Global Barometers, *F&M Global Barometers LGBTQ+ Perception Index, 2022 & 2024*, Dataset, Version 2, 2025, F&M Global Barometers, <https://www.fandmglobalbarometers.org/gbpi-results>.

[3] Wafula, Ian and Ford, Tamasin, “The Nigerians lured into a trap and blackmailed for being gay,” *BBC News*, May 15, 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-65560062>.