

galang

Building Community Strength.
Fueling Community Growth.

Galang is the Filipino word for respect. The word signifies respect for human rights and human diversity, which lies at the core of GALANG's struggle for equality and justice. *Galang* or respect is a message that should resonate not only in local LGBT communities, but also in mainstream Philippine society.

Many organizations in the Philippines work on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) issues. Similarly, a lot of NGOs focus on economic justice issues among urban poor populations. However, to our knowledge, GALANG is the only development organization whose working model involves grassroots organizing of lesbians, bisexual women, and trans men (LBTs) living in poverty. We aspire to be a change agent in the Philippine LGBT movement where the predominant faces and voices are those of middle-class, college-educated, and mainly gay male professionals—a picture that is neither accurate nor representative of the Filipino LGBT sector.

At the core of GALANG's work is the development of a cadre of local LBT leaders in poor communities nationwide who have sufficient self-confidence and capacities as LBT human rights advocates to discuss LBT rights as women's human rights, mobilize their peers, and organize grassroots LBT people's organizations (LPOs) who can be at the forefront of lobbying for policy change. We support our partner LPOs to become visible as community actors who speak on and mobilize around LBT issues and other pressing human rights concerns in depressed areas. GALANG's conscious decision to work among Filipinos who experience the multiple oppressions of class, poverty, sexual orientation, and gender identity/expression contributes to popularizing the message that to advance sexual rights, there is a need to confront and address the fact that Sexuality is a Development issue and that the majority of Filipinos, including sexual minorities, live in dire poverty.

Registered with the Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission as a non-government organization on August 29, 2008, GALANG takes pride in being a lesbian-initiated, lesbian-run feminist human rights organization that works with LBTs in urban poor communities. While our organization currently has both male and female—both gay and straight—staff and volunteer professionals, we continue to espouse and aspire for the feminist values of respect, economic justice, equality, diversity, fairness, and empowering processes at all levels of our work.

www.galangphilippines.org

WHO WE ARE

RESPECT LBT RIGHTS AS WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS.
RESPECT THE VOICE OF URBAN POOR LBTs.
LISTEN. AGITATE. EDUCATE. ORGANIZE.
RESPECT REALITIES ON THE GROUND.
START WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE, BUT DO NOT END THERE.

GALANG's capacity building activities are focused on equipping urban poor LBTs with the skills to analyze and articulate the rights and issues of their constituencies, organize and mobilize their peers to support advocacy for LBT human rights, and influence policy makers to develop policies that advance these rights. Through our community-based trainings on sexuality, human rights, and leadership, as well as awareness-raising campaigns to promote positive images of LBTs, we hope to contribute to improving the life skills and self-confidence of urban poor LBTs and help them cope with pervasive homophobia and discrimination.

We also work on strengthening partnerships and alliances to push policies supporting LBT human rights across sectors and at all levels. With the help of allies in civil society, government, the private sector, and academia, we aim to improve the access of Filipino urban poor LBTs to social services such as health, sanitation, education, and utilities. To promote acceptance of LBTs and hopefully open up more opportunities for gainful employment, we promote respect for diversity through our IEC (information, education, and communication) materials such as *Tatsulok Komiks*, our groundbreaking comic book series about Pamboy D'Tomboy, a modern-day lesbian hero. We also indigenize and popularize key human rights documents and related publications such as our Filipino translation of *The Yogyakarta Principles*, to promote the message that LBT rights are women's human rights.

At present, GALANG works with around 150 LBTs in three depressed areas in Quezon City, providing technical assistance in grassroots leadership and organizational development in order to catalyze the formation of at least one LBT people's organization (LPO) per partner community. In 2011, lesbians in GALANG's pilot community formed the Lesbian Alliance Movement (LAM)—*Lakas ng Kababaihan para sa Karapatan* (Strength of Women for their Rights), the first formally organized grassroots lesbian organization in Barangay Pansol. LAM's first set of officers was sworn in by no less than the *barangay* (village) chairperson.

GALANG's organizing model has garnered much interest from many fronts. Our strides at the grassroots level have so impressed colleagues in the women's and sexual rights movements that we have already been featured in several international publications and conferences. In 2010, we were chosen as one of fifteen best practices in advancing human rights based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression at the ARC International Dialogue in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) also featured us in their publication on building feminist movements, in a case study entitled "GALANG: A Movement in the Making for the Rights of Poor LBTs in the Philippines."



CONTACT US

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WHAT WE DO