



2020

Annual Report

www.agirmontreal.org

INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of AGIR's activities from April 1st 2019 until March 31st 2020 (this time period is consistent with AGIR's fiscal year). AGIR activities include Board of Directors' general and sub-committee meetings, along with a summary of the various initiatives undertaken this year. This report provides an opportunity to present the various successes and challenges that AGIR encountered this year, and concludes with presenting our proposed action plan for the coming year. To begin, this report includes AGIR's "heartbeat" (basis of unity) and a summary of last year's Annual General Meeting (AGM).



Photo from AGIR activity during Pride

AGIR'S HEARTBEAT

WHO ARE WE?

We believe everyone deserves to live a life free of violence, threat, fear and coercion. We believe that everyone is equal regardless of their migrant status. We believe in social, political and economic rights for all migrants. We believe all types of families have the right to stay together. We are aware of and working against systems of intersecting oppressions including, but not limited to, patriarchy, misogyny, racism, colonialism, xenophobia, ableism, classism, heterosexism, cissexism, transphobia, homophobia, etc.

HOW DO WE OPERATE?

We apply an anti-oppressive, non-judgmental and person-centered approach. We cultivate a respectful, inclusive, and welcoming environment where everyone feels safe(r) and secure. We build community with the participation of LGBTQ+ migrants. Our decision-making process informed and guided by the experiences and needs of LGBTQ+ migrants. We apply the principles of consensus-based decision-making and community organizing. We respect and value all individuals' journeys, skills, knowledge and contributions. We are committed to working in solidarity with organizations and groups that can help us achieve our vision. We are accountable to our members, collaborators and allies.

AGIR CODE OF ETHICS

This code of ethics is intended for AGIR personnel (board members, employees, interns, volunteers, etc.) with respect to relationships with each other and those accessing AGIR services/programs.

- I adhere to and promote AGIR's mission, objectives, basis of unity and this code of ethics.
- I will participate in building an inclusive and welcoming environment within AGIR
- I will adhere to all AGIR policies, procedures and guidelines
- I will endeavour to be anti-oppressive and non-judgemental towards others
- I will follow through on my responsibilities to AGIR and fulfill my duties to the best of my ability
- I will strive to represent AGIR in an accurate and responsible manner
- I will communicate with AGIR as soon as I notice that I cannot fulfil my duties
- I will maintain confidentiality by not divulging personal information that I have access to from my affiliation with AGIR (refer to AGIR policies)
- I will respect all AGIR personnel in addition to AGIR members and anyone accessing our services/programs
- I will not engage in sexual relations with individuals that AGIR is supporting
- I will participate in building an inclusive and welcoming environment within AGIR
- I will not use my role at AGIR as a means of intimidation, coercion or any other abuse of power over others
- I will not harass (physically, sexual, psychological) or discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, class, religion, age, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or gender identity.



Rainbow Coalition for Refuge Event in Ottawa



AGIR

2019-2020

COMPOSITION OF TEAM

AGIR Board of Directors 2019-2020

Dalia Tourki, Carmen Ng, Meryem Benslimane, Stephen De-Four-Wyre, Ahmed Hamila, Amanze George, Amanda Siino, Brian O'Neill

AGIR Support Team 2019-2020

Shams Lofty, Myloe Martel-Perry, Jean-François Gagnon, Laurie Fournier

Board of Directors Consultant 2019-2020

Edward Lee.

AGIR Employees 2019-2020

Training coordinator: Joseph Achille Tiedjou
Support coordinator: Iyan Hayadi

COMPOSITION AND CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

Calendar of Meetings

To ensure the achievement of our mission and priorities adopted at the AGM, the BoD met once a month. These meetings were organized and prepared by board members, usually the administrators. The administrators prepare the agenda, write the meeting minutes, and ensure people follow through with their tasks. Since AGIR's 2019 AGM (June 20, 2019), the Board of Directors met on the following dates:

- Jun 20 2019 "AGM"
- Aug 08 2019
- Sep 19 2019
- Oct 24 2019
- Nov 17 2019
- April 19th 2020
- May 17th 2020
- May 31st 2020
- June 9th 2020

AGIR

2019-2020

SUMMARY OF ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2019

AGIR's previous AGM was held on June 20th, 2019, in room 205 at the Centre for Gender Advocacy, in Montréal. This was AGIR's ninth AGM. During this AGM, The minutes of the 2018 AGM, the financial reports and the annual activity report were approved. Six members continued or began their term on the Board of Directors: Meryem Benslimane, Dalia Tourki, Stephen de-four Wyre, Carmen Ng, Ahmed Hamila, and George Amanze. Edward Lee continues to act as a consultant to AGIR since February 2018.

ADOPTED PRIORITIES

1. Enhance the services offered by AGIR.
2. Continue to integrate the new staff members.
3. Continue to develop new internal policies that reflect the new organizational structure.
4. Increase our participation in advocacy.
5. Complete our commitment to participate in the research project.

AGIR BOARD RETREAT AND VISIONING PROCESS

The AGIR board retreat was held in Montreal on October 17th and 18th 2019. The two days of the retreat brought together AGIR board members and employees. Edward Lee, as AGIR consultant and Jon McPhedran-Waitzr, who volunteered to facilitate the retreat. In total, 8 people attended the retreat.

Amongst the matters discussed at the retreat was AGIR's future, the activities of the pilot project funded by the Ministry of Immigration, French and Inclusion of Quebec (MIFI) in 2018, a review of the work of employees, the priorities of the organization, the evaluation of programs and policies, and the sources of funding. In particular, we reviewed the complaint policies as well as the complaint form, the employee assessment and supervision policy. We discussed the collaboration between employees and the Board of Directors and ways to improve it, we also discussed the current finances of the organization while working on a sustainable funding plan. In addition to the discussions, a community dinner was organized.

MIFI GRANT

In September 2018 AGIR was awarded a grant from the Ministry of Immigration, Francisation, Intégration (MIFI) of 50,000\$ per year for 3 years. The grant agreement enlists AGIR to participate in their Programme réussir l'intégration (PRINT) program which seeks to provide services of integration for those who have received their permanent residence, refugee status or protected persons status. In order to receive the grant each year we are required to support a certain number of those with the statuses we have listed above along with providing training to organizations for newcomers as well as organizations for sexual minorities on the realities of LGBTQ+ Migrants. We will continue to provide services for all LGBTQ+ migrants who come to AGIR, regardless of their status.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL TRAININGS

AGIR gave ten trainings to our volunteers, university students, and community groups working with migrants and/or LGBTQ+ groups. Those training sessions involved things like:

- Training about the realities of LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers, the various support services offered by AGIR, the legal framework for defending refugee claimants, the organization's security protocol, inclusive and support services approaches/policies, the history of the organization, its vision, its missions and the code of ethics.
- Overview of the rights of LGBTQ+ people in the world and the realities of Trans migrants living in Quebec and the campaigns carried out by the AGIR.
- Discussions on the history of colonization and its repression of homosexuality in the world, criminalization of homosexuality and the realities of LGBTQ+ migrants.
- The Itinerary of a refugee claimant.

These trainings were given to:

- AGIR new volunteers.
- Project 10 volunteers.
- Québec Solidaire political staffers, co-facilitated with Ed Lee.
- Social Work at McGill University students, co-facilitated with Dalia Tourki.
- Université de Montréal : an intervention in the course sexuality and migration of The Department of Political Science.
- Organizations working at the Montréal LGBTQ community centre, co-facilitated with the Table de Concertation des organismes travaillant avec les Table de concertation des organismes de réfugiées et immigrants (TCRI).
- Organizations affiliated to the CDC Centre-Sud.
- Centre Social d'Aide aux Immigrants (CSAI).

SUPPORT PROGRAM

This year, AGIR's support services focused primarily on community building by expanding our support groups and social activities. Our group activities on bringing LGBTQ migrants together to address their various integration needs with settling into and building their lives in Montreal and in Quebec.

General support group

A support group for people who identify as LGBT+ immigrants or refugees. Our members come to meet friends, share experience and have some fun. We offer snacks and activities that are suggested by our members. All of our general support groups were done at "The Refugee Center" who provided us with their space and the equipments that they have there like screen, speakers and projectors for free. Thank you to Abdulla Daoud who booked the space for us every month.

Women's support group

A support group for LGBTQ+ migrant and refugee women to meet and share experiences. This group was offered in collaboration with both the Centre de Solidarite Lesbienne (CSL) and the Reseau des lesbiennes du Quebec (RLQ), who both helped fund the activities for the group.

Trans and non binary support group

A support group facilitated by trans migrants for trans and non binary migrants. The group has been held at Astteq and facilitated in collaboration with them. The group has been funded by the centre for gender advocacy. Astteq has provided snacks and metro passes as well as a nurse in one of the sessions.

Drop-ins

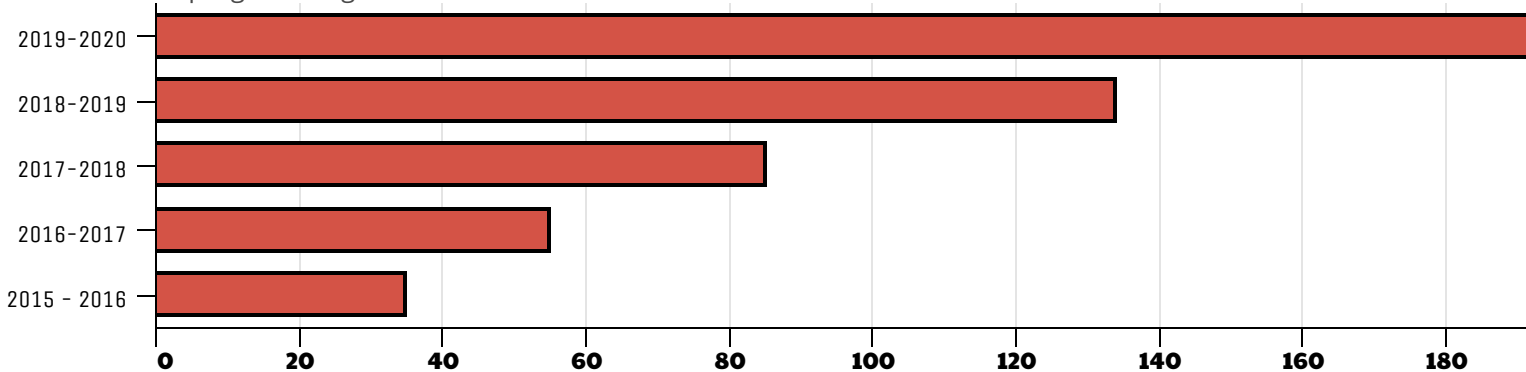
A private and confidential meeting in French or English, Spanish or Arabic with AGIR's support team. They will help assess the member's current situation and their immediate needs as an LGBTQ+ migrant in Montreal, provide them with useful information on site or via a follow-up email. No appointment; first come, first served. We have had 79 new members come to the drop-ins.

Youth program

Through the support of Equitas' youth program, AGIR received a small micro-grant to launch it's youth program, and a youth and staff member were able to attend the National Youth Action Speaking Rights Training in Fall 2019 in British Columbia for four days. The training provided the basis for the youth program with four other youth members. *An ongoing Youth Support Group was being developed (with support from P10) but was interrupted by COVID-19. We hope to resume this programming as soon as we can*

Art program

A weekly art group that has been developed in collaboration with Rosario Menéndez, visual artist and volunteer for this project, and Olivia Lhermi, intern at the Centre social d'aide aux immigrants (CSAI), with the purpose of helping our members to express themselves through art. The group targeted 10 LGBTQ+ migrants who arrived in Montreal a year ago or less. The final goal was to organize a public exhibition of the individual and collective projects at the CSAI. *The group was interrupted by COVID-19. We hope to resume this programming as soon as we can*



Total number of LGBTQ+ migrants who accessed AGIR support services and activities in the last five years

AGIR SUPPORT SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

192 LGBTQ+ migrants person have accessed AGIR support services and activities accessed from 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020

AGIR programs and how many times the sessions were held.

Support groups



13

Social events



4

Drop-ins



12

Youth program



6

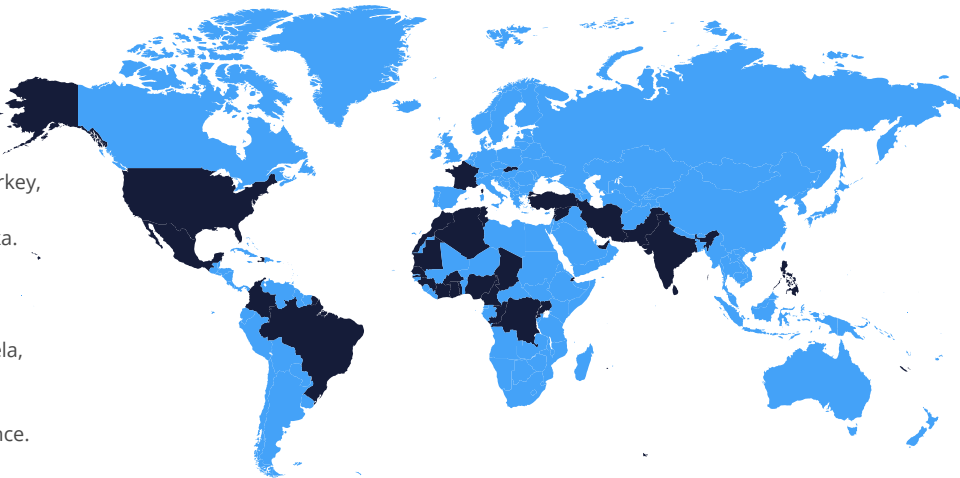
Art program



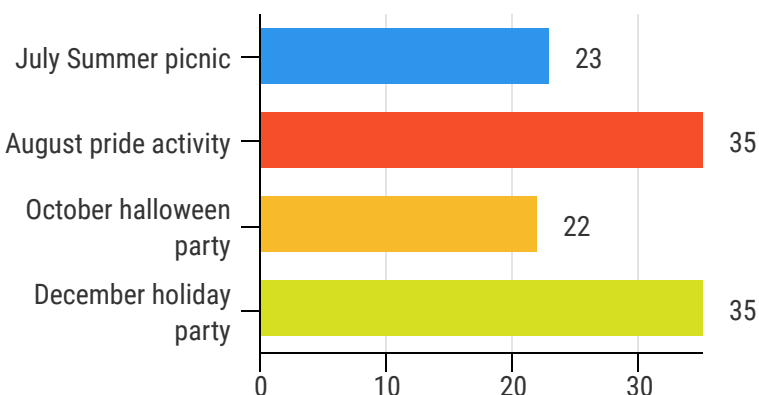
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AGIR's support services and activities: serving newcomers from over 34 countries this year

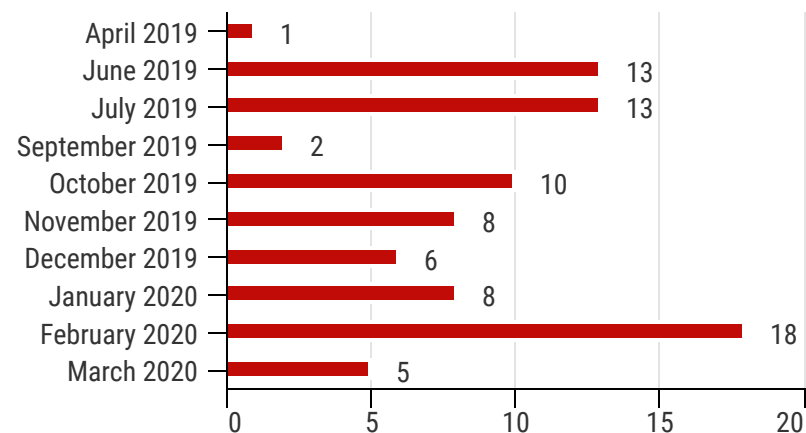
- **West Africa:** Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo.
- **Central Africa and East Africa:** Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Djibouti, Chad, Uganda.
- **North Africa:** Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia.
- **The Middle East:** Iran, Lebanon, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Syria.
- **South Asia:** India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka.
- **South East Asia:** Philippines.
- **The Caribbean:** Haiti.
- **Central America:** Mexico.
- **South America:** Columbia, Venezuela, Brazil.
- **North America:** United States.
- **Europe:** Albania, Italy, Slovakia, France.



Total number participants at Social activities 2019 - 2020



Total number of new members at drop-ins 2019- 2020



AGIR RESEARCH PROJECT

Supporting the Needs of LGBTQ Migrants: An Organizational Case Study of Service Delivery.

Research Team: Dr. Sarilee Kahn, School of Social Work, McGill University; Dr. Edward Lee, School of Social Work, University of Montreal, Javier Fuentes Bernal, Research Coordinator, School of Social Work, University of Montreal.

AGIR Advisory Committee members: Ahmed Hamila, Amanda Siino, Brian O'Neill

Former Advisory Committee members: Ramy Ayari, Claudio Betancourt, Stephen De Four-Wyre, Dalia Tourki

Over the past two years, AGIR has been involved in a community-based research project.

This project aims to document, through interviews and focus groups, the perspectives of various actors (i.e. supported members, board members, support team volunteers, etc.) who are presently or were historically involved within AGIR to assess AGIR's organizational structure and support activities. This project aims

to document the perspectives of the following actors historically and presently involved within AGIR, which include: LGBTQ migrants who were supported by AGIR, as well as LGBTQ migrants and non-LGBTQ migrants who served on the board of directors and/or as support team volunteers. Participants also need to be in good standing with the organization.

Although the recruitment phase had to be terminated abruptly due to the sanitary measures associated with COVID-19, the project was able to complete 14 interviews. Data analysis is done through the Dedoose software. In collaboration with the advisory committee, the research team will complete a research report, an infographic and at least one scientific article. The preliminary results of the project will be presented to the Advisory Committee members by the end of June 2020.

Representation, Meetings and Events AGIR participated at

Meetings with:

- South Central Community Development Corporation.
- Table de concertation des organismes de réfugiées et immigrants (TCRI).
- Alliance for the Reception and Integration of Immigrants (ALAC).
- Ms. Raisso Sougal, Political Attaché to Ms. Manon Massé, Member of the National Assembly.
- 13 class of Students at the francization program at Cégep Marie-Victorin.

Events:

- Launch of ALLIANCE INTERNATIONALE FRANCOPHONE POUR L'ÉGALITÉ ET LES DIVERSITÉS (EGIDES). We facilitated contacts between the project team based in Montreal and LGBTQ+ organizations and actors in West Africa helping plan the project team's work visits to Africa.
- 87th congress of the Association francophone pour le savoir (ACFAS).
- The Fondation Émergence Gala.
- Community day during pride activities.
- Canadian Council of Refugees consultation.
- Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR) in Ottawa.
- Rainbow Coalition for Refuge National Forum in Ottawa.
- Engagement Session between the Government of Canada and the Canadian Rainbow Coalition for Refuge.
- Dignity Network roundtable meetings on Canada and global LGBTI human rights.

AGIR'S SUPPORT TEAM

All our hard work throughout the year would not have been possible without our incredible team! We would like to recognize all the different roles that AGIR volunteer, Staff and Board Members dedicated themselves to this year:

Support Services Coordinator: Iyan Hayadi.

Training Coordinator: Joseph Achille Tiedjou.

Support Groups Facilitators: Myloe Martel-Perry, Shams Lotfy, Stephen De Four-Wyre, Laurie Fournier, Joseph Achille Tiedjou, Amanda Siino, Ahmed Hamila, Iyan Hayadi.

Drop-ins team for one-to-one support: Shams Lotfy, Jean-François Gagnon, Laurie Fournier, Iyan Hayadi.

Support for individual follow-ups and accompaniment: Shams Lotfy, Laurie Fournier, Myloe Martel-Perry, Iyan Hayadi.

Board Members who contributed to AGIR social events: Carmen Ng, Dalia Tourki, Ahmed Hamila, Amanda Siino, Georges Amanze, Stephen De Four-Wyre.

Board Members staff support team: Carmen Ng, Ahmed Hamila, Amanda Siino.

Volunteer training, knowledge-transfer: Cynthia Beaudry, Edward Lee, Stephen De Four-Wyre, Shams Lotfy, Myloe Martel-Perry, Christina Olivieri, Iyan Hayadi.

Program development: Shams Lotfy, Myloe Martel-Perry, Laurie Fournier, Ahmed Hamila, Amanda Siino, Iyan Hayadi.

Policy development: Ahmed Hamila, Ed Lee, Cynthia Beaudry, Akki Mackay, Carmen Ng, Stephen De-Four-Wyre, Ahmed Hamila, Amanze George, Amanda Siino, Joseph Achille Tiedjou .

COLLABORATIONS

- Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI).
- International Centre for Human Rights Education (Equitas).
- Conseil Québécois LGBT (CQ-LGBT).
- Action Réfugiés Montréal.
- AIDS Community Cares Montréal (ACCM).
- Conseil canadien pour les réfugiés (CCR).
- Centre Communautaire LGBTQ+.
- Centre de lutte contre l'oppression des genres.
- Coalition familles LGBT.
- Fédération du Québec pour le planning des naissances (FQPN).
- Action Santé Travesti(e)s et Transsexuel(le)s du Québec (ASTTeQ).
- Just solutions clinic.
- Santé et mieux-être des hommes gais et bisexuels, cis et trans (REZO).
- Child care collective.
- Rainbow collation.
- Dignity network.
- The Refugee Center.
- Sex Worker Advocacy and Support (STELLA).
- Réseau des lesbiennes du Québec (RLQ).
- Centre De Solidarite Lesbienne (CSL).
- Centre social d'aide aux immigrants (CSAI).
- Solidarity across borders.



(AGIR would like to sincerely thank everyone for their continued support and trust)

PROPOSED AGIR WORK PRIORITIES 2020-2021:

- 1- Organisation consolidation: review and adapt AGIR's structure and services.
- 2- Solidifying and diversifying funding sources.
- 3- Hiring a general coordinator and transitioning to a more work-balanced board and staff.
- 4- Expand our partnerships and collaborations across organisation in Canada, Quebec and Montreal.
- 5- Continue our collaboration on research projects to better serve the needs of our members and increase/support the participation of those directly affected within AGIR.

Contributed to this report:

- Ahmed Hamila
- Amanda Siino
- Laurie Fournier
- Carmen Ng
- Charles-Antoine Leboeuf
- Joseph Achille Tiedjou
- Brian O'Neill
- Iyan Hayadi