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Meeting  
Report

# Marriage Equality Strategy Meeting

1 - 3 December 2018, Bangkok, Thailand





## **Acknowledgements**

Meeting Report

### **Marriage Equality Strategy Meeting**

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Meeting Report

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## Acronyms

MSM	Men how have Sex with Men
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
SOGI	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity



## Executive Summary

On 1st - 3rd December 2018, APCOM in conjunction with Freedom to Marry held a 3 day seminar on Marriage Equality. In attendance were key personnel representatives from various Organizations and countries involving- Cambodia, China, Japan, Hong Kong, Philippines, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. Helped to share their views and solutions that have had in order for. The seminar revolved around the discussion of the difficulties and challenges that have been faced in each country when they have tried to win Marriage Equality and how to the representatives of each country can learn from each other's journey.

On the first day Evan Wolfson, Thalia Zepatos and Cameron Tolle from Freedom to Marry shared their success story to win Marriage Equality in the US along with the different strategies they had used for each circumstance. Khun Kerdchoke Kasamwongjit, Deputy General of rights and liberty protection department, ministry of justice further shared his insight regarding the contribution of his team towards legalizing same sex marriage in Thailand and the progress so far. Later through the day, the representatives of each country provided a brief background of their journey so far, the challenges and difficulties that are being faced and the current strategy going forward.

The Second day began with Adam from Australian Marriage Equality organization and Cameron from Freedom to marry as they shared their experience and insight regarding the different strategies and objectives to build a campaign on the digital as well as the offline platform and different ways to link them to each other. Thalia discussed about Fundraising and the different ways that each organization can engage with their supporters for grassroots fundraising and raising funds through the online platform as well. Furthermore, Adam shared his experience with fundraising on the digital platform in Australia, mainly focusing on building relationships and having clear strategy. Alex Greenwich from the Australian Marriage Equality organization further discussed fundraising through High-end/institutional donors and Coalition building. Campaign Goal and Structure was further discussed by Cameron along with the key responsibilities of each team/person in the organization.

On the Third day, the attendees engaged in brain storming sessions (in groups) to discuss the advice and lessons that they will be taking back to implement in their campaign. The representatives from each country then provided their plan involving - The goal to achieve marriage and the targeted year, their strategy and plan, how to raise awareness and build relationships in public, identifying key messengers, fundraising and their long term strategy. The day then concluded Midnight from APCOM thanking all the representatives of different countries for their support and attendance. Moreover, Evan and Thalia encouraged all the attendees from different countries to form a network to share their success and challenges with each other and reach the main goal to support and cheer for each other to legalize same sex marriage.



## Background and Content

Same-sex marriage is the marriage of a same-sex couple, entered into in a civil or religious ceremony. The term marriage equality refers to a political status in which the marriages of same-sex couples and the marriages of opposite-sex couples are recognized as equal by the law. In many countries across Asia today, Marriage equality is still a frowned upon subject. Although there has been some progress in legalizing marriage equality, many countries in Asia still condemn same sex marriage and deem it illegal and punishable by law. Seeing the need to support and legalize same sex marriage, APCOM and Freedom to marry held a 3 day conference in Bangkok titled Marriage Equality Strategy Meeting. The conference held at the So by Sofitel hotel, Bangkok lasted from 1st - 3rd December 2018.



Photo credit: Pongthorn Chanlearn (Mplus)



*Saturday, 1st December  
2018*

On the first day of the Marriage Equality Strategy Meeting, the session began with introductions of the attendees and speakers. In attendance were the representatives from various countries advocating legalization same sex marriage in their respective countries of - Cambodia, China, Japan, Hong Kong, Philippines, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. The day began with Evan from Freedom to Marry, providing a background of the goals, objectives and the strategies that had been used to legalize same sex marriage in the U.S while providing support to the representatives of each country to successfully run their movement and campaigns to their goal of legalizing same sex marriage.

Midnight from APCOM further explained that the main purpose of the meeting is to support each other by sharing the journey that everyone has gone through while also sharing the difficulties and solutions to every difficulty so that everyone can learn from each other. Furthermore, Midnight encouraged everyone to share their stories and the goal that they want to reach - "Everyone has a dream, without the dream we can't start the journey."

Khun Kerdchoke Kasamwongjit, Deputy General of rights and liberty protection department, ministry of justice provided insight about the LGBTQI community of Thailand and how the media reported same sex marriage as their highlight. It was explained that the Thai media provided a lot of attention to couples who were organizing same sex marriages as it was always on the news. However, it is a positive event that the news keeps on showing same sex marriages as it helps to spread awareness through the public of Thailand even though there is also a sign of negative attitude from many people as they deem it inappropriate. Khun Kerdchoke Kasamwongjit shared the progress made so far in Thailand to legalize same sex marriage by explaining that a draft was initiated with the legal department around 6 years ago but we still do not have any legal framework. Moreover, a new draft has been submitted but it has been rendered by the authorities, making it not the same as the laws to get married amongst heterosexual couples. Khun Kerdchoke Kasamwongjit further thanked everyone for organizing and attending the meeting and hopes that the meeting will help same sex marriage get legalized.



Photo credit: Pongthorn Chanlearn (Mplus)



Evan Wolfson and Thalia Zepatos from Freedom to Marry shared the successes and the challenges faced by them in their journey to achieve and legalize same sex marriage in the U.S. Thalia encouraged everyone to create a network to discuss our learnings and successes so that everyone can learn from each other. Evan reminded everyone that currently there are 1.1 Billion people living in a country with freedom to marry and this further leads to evidence and track record that has been obtained from 25 countries which shows that families are stronger, society is in a better place and the economy is stronger as well. Moreover, businesses have made it clear that ending discrimination is not only good for the gay and transgender community but it is also great for the business and the economy. A brief has also been filed by 379 businesses involved stating that legalizing same sex marriage is good for business and economy in the US; this is just one piece of evidence out of many which can help to change people's minds.

Evan further explained that there are 4 elements of successful campaign that everyone must consider to win:

1. The constitution: Evan shared some elements of this journey regarding the U.S constitution that the constitution in the US that guarantees certain legal rights. Not only the document but the entire system - right to organize, free speech, protests, elements of rule of law of society etc. Many countries in the world do not have that but we will work on achieving it. The constitution in the US just was not enough, in order to win there were also needed 3 other elements as follows.
2. Movement: It takes multiple tries and a long period of time to reach the goal in the U.S. No one organization, one decade or one person made all the changes by required; it took many pieces of puzzles to reach the goal. It took 40 years and millions of dollars involving many organizations collectively. Even though no one person did it, it also was not random set of actions as there was a strategy involved.
3. Strategy: A clear strategy helps organizations to be on the right track and make the right decisions. Every movement needs a strategy. Different organizations and people will have different ideas but once there is a set strategy then the needs and requirements to reach the goal automatically become clear, resulting in the right steps taken.
4. Campaign - In the US the campaign was called freedom to marry. It took an entire movement to support the freedom to marry campaign. Campaign existed not to do everything but to make sure that everything that was required was happening by coordinating and encouraging, supplying the necessary pieces that were missing in many organizations.

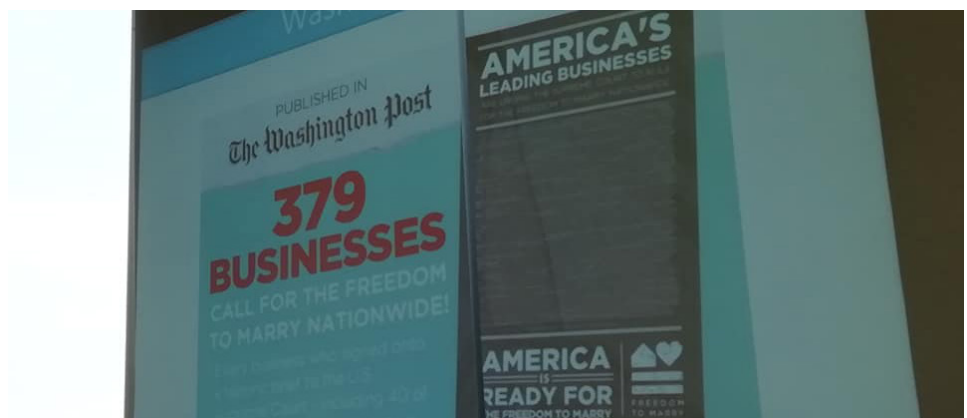


Photo credit: Pongthorn Chanlearn (Mplus)





In addition to the 4 elements of a successful campaign, Evan also shared one of the most important parts of the campaign that helped them achieve success; the ladder of clarity:

1. Clarity of Goal
2. Clarity of Strategy
3. Clarity of Vehicles - Program , partnership, structure and roadmap
4. Clarity of Action Steps

Evan then concluded by sharing the three focus words that helped them reach their goal in the US were - Hope, clarity and Tenacity. Hope to reach their goal and make people believe that change can happen, Clarity of goals and strategy and the Tenacity to help to change things by making sure other people stay with the movement such as the funders, partners and volunteers.

The representatives from various countries then shared their journey so far with the aim to legalize same sex marriage and achieve marriage equality in their respective countries. The representatives from Cambodia shared that the Cambodian culture demands that a marriage is to be in between opposite sex couples so it is very difficult to legalize same sex marriage. Moreover, so far they have worked to advocate same sex marriage through social media such as Facebook and their main strategy is to mobilize and build LGBT families to take care and protect their family members from discrimination and also to fight for marriage equality. Furthermore, the strategy to change constitution barrier is to firstly gain public support by engaging with legislators and showing them the evidence as there is a backlash from the public regarding marriage equality, which is why they are focusing on raising public awareness. All in All, they are working with a group of lawyers to do legal analysis and draft the changes that are to be proposed to the government in order to achieve same sex marriage.

The representatives from China explained that currently the media in their country is facing censorship by the government regarding all LGBT related news which results in public attitudes vastly depending from area to area. According to an internet survey they held 2 years ago, 20% of the people support gay marriage which is why there is a need to do a domestic survey to gain new evidence to show the government and to present in the court to change the current law. Moreover, from a purely community aspect , the gay community is very eager to legalize same sex marriage but there is very less engagement from people outside the LGBT community which is slowly being changed as there are upcoming human right lawyers that support the LGBT community. To summarize, the way to win marriage is to persuade the party leadership who will then allow the national assembly/congress to change the law. In addition, the main focus is on increasing the visibility of gay parents and families to raise awareness and bring it to the attention of the government which can be a gentle way to push the congress to further change the law.



The representatives from Hong Kong shared that currently same sex marriage is not recognized legally by the government and the government has said that it is not something that are willing to legalize as it will negatively have an impact on the society. The public support to legalize same sex marriage in 2013 was 38% which has now risen to 50.4% indicating that many more people are not supporting same sex marriage. However, many of the people who currently do not support same sex marriage are the people who uphold traditional family values out of which many are Christians. Moreover, the only way to legalize same sex marriage is through court and the evidence that would be provided to the court as in the past 20 years most of the rights have been achieved through litigation. The current problem is that right now there is a sense of who the leader and the captain of the movement is. Everyone wants to be the the leader of the movement as lawyers are having internal conflicts amongst themselves as to who will take the lead in the movement. Evan provided possible solutions by stating that it is not about getting everybody to support, it is about getting enough people; it is not about getting every lawyer in the country and every opposition to agree, it is about getting enough supporters. To conclude, since the main way to win same sex marriage in Hong Kong is through court ruling, the campaign's goal and strategy must be adjusted where enough people are working together to legalize marriage in the court.

Furthermore, as per the sharing from the representatives from Japan, currently there is no anti-discrimination law in Japan and there are no stipulations in the constitution of the civil court in relation to issuing same sex marriage. The government does not envision same sex marriage but it does not say anywhere that the government prohibits it as well. Moreover, the public support for same sex marriage and marriage equality is at 51% which has been the same for the past 10 years; the representatives from Japan are focusing in increasing the percentage of public supporters to be around 70% to 80% as they believe that it can help in showing the government that there will be acceptance from the public if same sex marriage is legalized. When it comes to the government and national politics, the delegates from Japan explained that there is not enough knowledge and understanding of same sex marriage within the different departments of the government but it there has been a sign of positivity due to a clause that has been presented to the government from the 2020 Olympics authorities which prohibits discrimination against sexual orientation. The clause is aimed at tackling hate speech ahead of 2020 Olympics games due to which Tokyo has now adopted anti-discrimination ordinance to help protect the LGBT community. Evan further helped to summarize the path to victory for Japan which is to pursue a winning strategy through the court and legislation as it is possible that the legislator will be the pressurizing agent on the court to legalize same sex marriage.



Photo credit: Pongthorn Chanlearn (Mplus)



The next presentation that highlights the journey and the path to victory was from Thailand. The delegates from Thailand shed a light on the current situation in the country by stating that same sex marriage is not legal as of 2018 in Thailand and any legal same sex marriage from other countries is also not recognized in Thailand. There have been attempts in the past to legalize same sex marriage as in 2013 a gay couple requested to register marriage in the district office which was refused by the government but the couple had sent a complaint to the justice parliamentary office and the ministry of justice. However, the government had dissolved in 2014 due to which all proceeds for this case were stopped and then reopened in 2016. Due to this case, the ministry of justice has provided a lot of support to the LGBT community by doing consultations with the religion leaders and within the LGBT community as well. Moreover, a draft of 98 sections was formed and proposed to the legal community which was then cut down to 70 sections by the community soon after. This draft was then uploaded to the organization's website and received 97.9% votes in favor of the draft and every region besides the Southern Thailand had voted 90% in favor of the draft as well. In addition to the votes of the public being considered for the draft that is to be proposed, UNDP is also supporting in reviewing the draft that is to be proposed to the government. The presentation was then summarized by the representatives as they shared that the path to winning marriage in Thailand is through an act of the parliament to pass a law establishing the freedom of marriage for everyone and the next step right now would be to gain national recognition of same sex marriage and using that as a push in the next 5 years as evidence that Thailand is ready to acknowledge same sex marriage.

The presentation of the journey and path to victory from the delegates of Philippines showed that just as the rest of the countries that are in the meeting, same sex marriage is not legal in Philippines and marriages done abroad are not recognized by the government. The representatives further explained that Churches can perform religious ceremonies in the country but they are still not recognized legally. As for public support, currently 61% of the population is against same sex marriage, however; in 2017 8,000 people had attended the pride march which has risen to be 25,000 in 2018 as observed from the pride march. Moreover, the public campaign done so far has been limited due to the funding and the current priority being anti-discrimination bill instead of same marriage as the politicians are too sensitive to the matter and the overall climate in the country is very religious (80% of the population being roman Catholics and 15% being Muslims). Due to the political sensitivity and the religious population, it has been difficult to make social change happen as whenever there is a news broadcast about same sex couples, there is always a public backlash. All in All, this further goes to show that there needs to be a lot of work done to educate the public in order to change public opinions.



Following the presentation of Philippines, the representatives of Korea highlighted similar current situations in their country regarding same sex marriage not being recognized legally and there being no anti-discrimination law including SOGI. The status of public support is 34% in as of 2017 and the numbers have been increasing when the wordings of the questions is changed to “do same sex couples deserve rights” instead of “same sex marriage”. The delegates also highlighted that there have been attempts to legalize same sex marriage as in 2015 a gay couple had appealed to the court but the case was dismissed. Moreover there have been two books published and many capacity building seminars are held to increase community education regarding same sex marriage and the LGBT community. The current goal of the organization is to build a sustainable movement along with cohesive strategy to resolve issues and build appositve narrative through small winnable court cases.

The representatives from Vietnam stated that the current situation of the legal system is that it does not recognize same sex marriage but it does not say that that same sex marriage is prohibited, which does not make it illegal. However, the general public has the perception in the society that a wedding ceremony of same sex couples is illegal. Moreover, the lawmakers notice and care about the opinions of the general public as they are afraid of public backlash, which makes them skeptical of changing the law. Currently the main goal is to have a positive influence on the government officials as next year there will be a revision of the law of family and there is hope for the law to be completely amended by the year 2023.

The delegates from Taiwan highlighted the 3 best things they did to get closer to their goal to achieve marriage equality and legalizing same sex marriage as per the following:

1. Publicized values such as respect amongst the community by advertising and spreading the message on newspapers.
2. Told a lot of stories – in order to educate people and make them understand the LGBT community, there were a lot of stories collected from the community. People from the older generations were also invited to help and explain to the general public regarding the movement and why they should join.
3. Looked for funding in the early years – the organization raised 10 million Taiwan dollars to organize huge rallies in 2016 up to a point where there were 250,000 people who had participated and created a friendly environment.

The delegates further explained that since most of the oppositions belonged to churches, they already had a lot of funds to go to and use the mass media platforms to execute their campaign strategies.





Thalia then asked the representatives to shed some light on the challenges that were faced by the organization in Taiwan. The top 3 challenges faced by the organization are as follows:

1. Fake news created by the opposition – the representatives explained that currently there is no solution to this problem and there is no possible way to have the fake news removed as the older generation is spreading these messages through private LINE groups.
2. Not enough resources to send out messages – there was not enough budget and funding to send the message across despite a lot of research being done in regards to the kind of message that would have the highest impact
3. The opposition kept breaking the rules of democracy – the representatives added that this is one of the biggest challenges as generally the poll states that 50% of the population supports gay marriage since 2014 but the opposition has been receiving a lot of funding from the conservative churches from the U.S which allows them to use the mass media platform leading to a drop in survey results.

The final session of first day of the meeting was then concluded by Alex Greenwich from the Australian Marriage Equality organization, who presented and highlighted the journey of building public support through momentum in Australia. Alex highlighted that in the beginning, there was a ban on same sex marriage in 2004 along with opposition from both major political parties. Moreover there was low public support at a maximum of 34%, along with low funding. Alex then further showed the path that was taken which involved nationwide campaign that delivered marriage equality in 2017 along with 60%+ in support in all key demographics. Moreover, they were on the number 1 social media story along with every corporate, union and celebrity showing their support. Furthermore, it was also concluded that they won by firstly losing and losing forward which helped them gain their momentum year after year.

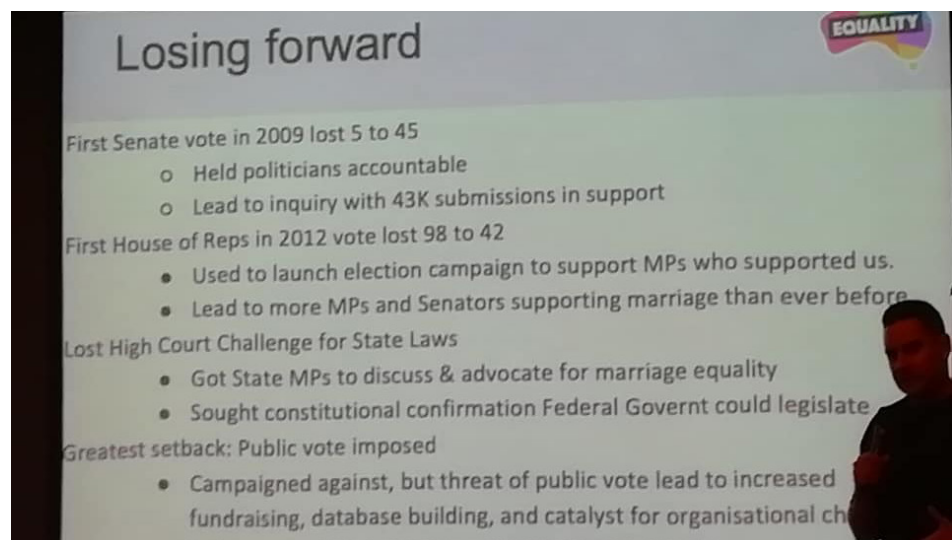


Photo credit: Pongthorn Chanlearn (Mplus)



*Sunday, 2nd December  
2018*

Day two's agenda revolved around using online and offline Platform to build a campaign.

In the first session, Adam and Cameron presented about connecting the offline and the online organizing to move marriage forward. As per the collective discussion from the representatives of different countries, it was deduced that many online channels were being used for campaigns such as – LINE, Wechat, Twitter and Facebook. It was then presented their job as activists is to build a movement to overcome obstacles and win. In order to win, there has to be a strong base which has to be organized in smart ways such as rating the audience on a 1-5 Likert scale and then identifying the key persuaders and movers from the results. Moreover, the presenters highlighted the four steps in the Theory of change:

1. Identify your moment: This step involves only contacting a supporter with a real purpose.
2. Urgency – After identifying the moment, the presenters suggested that a sense of urgency makes people act quickly.
3. Solution: Providing a solution to the sense of urgency to the supporters
4. Ask: This step was highlighted to be one of the most difficult pieces as this involves asking the supporters to act to the solution provided in the previous step.

Adam further highlighted the ways in which the offline supporters and the community can be encouraged to move to the online digital platform. Some of the steps highlighted were as follows:

1. Organize signup sheets at offline events
2. Add the details to the email list
3. Highlighting offline activity on the digital platform through pictures and videos on social media
4. There is no specific organization that is either online or offline – the organization exists as whole, involving both platforms
5. Every time there is an offline event, organizations need to aim to get the participants on the online platform in order to encourage engagement



The next point that was explained was that the digital platform varies from culture to culture. For example – in Taiwan the text messaging application LINE is one of the major messengers while so the advertisements can be made through text messaging while in china the social media culture is very different and the majority of the population prefers videos. The delegates from china further explained that their videos got 100,000 views and 30,000 hotline calls. Furthermore, they had conducted a survey by which they had concluded that a large part of the population prefers animated films due to which they have been advocating and spreading awareness through animated short films. Adam further added that Email is one of the most important platforms as it can reach a large number of supporters in a very short time.

The second session was conducted by Evan and Thalia regarding Fundraising. Evan explained that fundraising is an important part of activism and can be seen as the fuel that is required to move forward. Moreover, in order to make supporters gain interest in donating and the campaign as a whole, it is crucial to provide results and the progress made so far. Evan then showed a video that had been used by Freedom to Marry and their roadmap to victory as an example for the rest of the representatives from various countries to follow.

Next, Thalia further encouraged participation and open discussion from everyone in the meeting to brainstorm and provide their ideas regarding fundraising, some of the ideas presented are as per the following:

- Free concerts for the public with popstars who support the campaign
- Dining event every few months
- Home dinners cooked by someone from the community in which many other people are invited to promote and build a sense of belonging
- Contacting bars and restaurants to donate some of their income to promote the campaign.
- Host parties to encourage the members of the communities to bring more members along in order to create a large support group

The next sharing from the Thalia involved ways of identifying prospects for fundraising. It was pointed out that prospects are referred to as people who have potential to donate but have not yet made the donation. Some of the characteristics of prospects are as per the following:

- A – Ability: They have the ability to give
- B – Belief : They believe in the campaign
- C – Contact: There is a way to contact them



Adam further shared his insights and the journey of fundraising in Australia. The journey and the experience of fundraising in Australia was highlighted as per the below:

1. The art of Asking:
  - Ask, then ask again.
  - There were some weeks where supporters were asked to donate around 5 to 6 times a week.
  - By the end of 4 months there had been a total of 10,900 supporters averaging 84 dollars per donation.
  - People who were in a relationship were more involved in the campaign as they felt that they had a sense of ownership.
  - The organization primarily asked people to donate through Email.
2. Relationships are vital, Build your online community:
  - The key is to build an email list and keep increasing numbers over the years.
  - One of the main reasons why their email list was growing was because they were building relationships with people.
3. Make a plan: fundraising is most successful when there is a plan
4. Bring people with you: tell a story and share the strategy

Next, Alex presented regarding the pathway and advice to gain more High end and institutional donors. One of the main points that were highlighted was to have a clear pathway and a plan to success as in the campaign run in Australia, they were able to gain success by explaining their agenda to the supporters and telling their success stories. Moreover, from Alex's personal experience, high end donors usually come at the end once it is proven that the campaign is to be a success and the strategy is well aligned with the campaign goals. It is also important to note that endorsements are crucial for high end donors as they trust other people who have been involved with the campaign in order to gain confidence such as other politicians and business owners.

Later in the day, Cameron provided clear and key responsibilities of different leads and different departments of an organization in order to provide some clarity for the representatives from different countries in order to implement the same in their respective organizations. The key responsibilities respective to the role/departments are as per below:






What are the key responsibilities?

- **Key responsibilities of a Campaign Manager**
  - Conductor of the orchestra - keep every piece moving together in union
  - Oversees the budget
  - Oversees development and implementation of the plan
  - Decider/approver of major campaign decisions
  - Manages senior staff
  - Public face/spokesperson
- **Operations team**
  - Manages the books and finances
  - Coordinates logistics
  - HR/payroll
  - Compliance
- **Communications**
  - Public relations / earned media
  - Oversees campaign message discipline
  - Pitch reporters
  - Create plan to drive proactive, public narrative
  - Press releases / ghostwrite op-eds
- **Digital Team**
  - Many times digital and communications are put together but they are two different area of responsibility
  - Email
  - Social media
  - Online fundraising
  - Oversees website
  - Online ads/list growth



- **Fundraising: responsible to hit the fundraising goals**
  - Major donors
  - Small dollar donation strategy
  - Event management
  - Corporate outreach
  - Apply for grants/work with foundations
- **Political work**
  - Grow the coalition by enlisting support and key mobilizing other key organizations
  - Lead legislative and lobbying strategy
- **Political work**
  - Responsible to enlist other NGO and support of businesses, and unions
  - Responsible to mobilize the members of coalition to take action and give resources to the organization
- **Field + organizing: building public support**
  - Grassroots volunteer mobilization
  - Oversee base building or direct voter contact programs
  - Mobilize constituents to contact lawmakers
- **MID level/entry level staff**
  - Managers
  - Associates
  - Interns
  - Full-time Volunteers

- 
- Other
    - Website design
    - Initial branding/Design
    - Ongoing Maintenance/updates
    - Graphic design
    - Polling
    - Advertising firm
    - Ad placement/media buyer

The day ended with a session on Coalition by Alex the main task involved in coalition building was highlighted. Alex shared the 4 main key questions to consider before coalition building:

1. Why are you asking?
2. What do your partners need?
3. Who does the asking?
4. How are you managing relationships?

Furthermore, Alex suggested that one of the main points to consider during coalition building with corporates is to get the right person to do the asking and have list of options for what is needed such as legal support , office space, seconded staff or just requesting to sign up to support. Moreover, when it comes to coalition building with NGOs it is important to map out what is needed and where the strengths are. Furthermore the main task is to reach out and build relationships as a good NGO partner will connect one organization to the other. When it comes to coalition building with faith groups, it is important to choose the messenger and know in advance the kind of resources that will be needed.

All in all, the key thing with coalition building is clear strategy, clear ask and the right messenger.



*Monday, 3rd December  
2018*

On the last day of the conference, the morning began with representatives of different countries having a discussion amongst themselves in order to plan and share the successes and the challenges faced during campaign run. The session continued into a discussion and country debrief shortly.

The representatives from Vietnam shared that their goal to achieve marriage equality is by the year 2025. The main reason that they had chosen the year 2025 is that the every 10 years the government reviews the law and they are expecting the marriage and family law to be amended by 2023. Once the law gets amended in 2023, it will take 2 more years for the process to be finished. Furthermore, they explained that they are already working with corporates but it is still a work in progress while they are also planning to engage with lawyer groups, teachers and doctors to support their campaign. When it comes to coalition, they are looking to engage with the civil society as they do not want the government to think that they are antigovernment. Moreover, some of the fundraising plans that have involve starting out to test grassroots through online platform as they can build their database and ask people to donate. As for the offline platform, they are planning to contact individual donors as well as major donors. When it comes to building public support, the representatives shared that they will be conducting market research to identify new potential supporters and further build relationships with them.

The representatives from Thailand also provided detailed insight regarding their future plan to introduce civil partnership next year as a road to equal marriage. They have set an aim to achieve marriage equality by the year 2024 as they expect the civil partnership law to be passed next year. In the meantime, they also plan to engage with the relevant Thai political parties to discuss how they want to achieve legalization of same sex marriage while also raising awareness of the general public by creating events that mention marriage equality. Moreover, they are planning to fundraise by creating and organizing events where people donate to many different causes such as human rights, people with disabilities, women rights and more. Furthermore, they had also mentioned that they already have a very good relationship with many NGOs but now they are focusing on working with the government sector as they are the important decision makers.

Next, the representatives from Taiwan had shed some light on the plan and the strategy that they would like to follow. They had shared that their next task would be to visit several different ministers that have high political influence on this act who can ensure that the act will be for marriage equality and not some watered down version. Furthermore, they also explained that the main reason that they lost the referendum this time was due to the influencers not receiving enough support as there were not enough resources leading to not enough communication. They aim to focus more on grassroots work as the opposition has been applying a lot of pressure on the politicians. All in All, the deadline set by the constitutional court is 24 May 2019, while there is still an option to run the clock out.

Shortly after the sharing from the representatives from Taiwan, The delegates from Korea also shared their goal to achieve marriage equality – which was set to be by the year 2028. The main reason that 2028 has been set as the goal is because it will be the first year of the next political party. Moreover, the path to victory would also be through the constitutional court of Korea in order to legalize same sex marriage and marriage equality. When it comes to fundraising, the representatives shared that they want to focus on grassroots donations while also seeking international foundations and donations. As for public support, they believe that the movable middle is from the age of 30 years old to 40 years old as they that is the demographic that had ticked “I don’t know” on the survey. Furthermore, they would also be sharing their stories as the marriage constitution does not have a good reputation at the moment. All in all their long term strategy is to educate the judges and give them as much information as possible while telling them stories from the community.





The representatives from Philippines aim to win marriage by the year 2024 while firmly believing that the path to victory is through the court. The aim to go through legislations that can be influenced in the court as there is already a court case pending. Moreover, the main effort would be to build public pressure in order to influence the legal decisions. As for fundraising, they aim to fundraise from international institutions while also doing what has been done in the past – small donations and crowd funding. The main audience to gain public support is through lawmakers, Catholics and the general public which is why one of their main messengers is through the religious community such as catholic parents. Furthermore, Philippines also has the highest social media presence so the organization aims to take advantage of the situation and use the social media platform for their campaign.

In addition, the representatives from Hong Kong shared that they aim to achieve marriage equality by the year 2024 and it would be achieved through the court. They also aim to build coalition with the international community, western diplomatic commissions and some religious groups. Moreover, they would get their funding from online crowd funding and focus on partnering with merchandize businesses that donate a part of their earnings to the LGBT organization. The main aim is also to gain the support of the judges, politicians, lawmakers and educators in order to achieve overall increased public support for marriage equality.

In addition, the aim to achieve marriage equality by the year 2023 was shared by the representatives of Japan. They had also shared that their path to victory would be through legislation and national legislation for which they have to collect evidence and appeal to the regional courts first. They also aim to conduct a campaign to increase public education and build coalition with lobby groups while also focusing on fundraising. Moreover, they had also mentioned that their key decision makers would be politicians as they want every politician to meet at least one LGBT couple in their district so that they are aware of LGBT community existing in their district as well.

The representatives from China had shared that they aim to win marriage equality by 20th May 2028 as 20th May is considered to be a romantic day in China. They had also shared that their path to victory would be through community mobilization as currently they do not have many people who stand up for marriage equality and it can only be done by educating the public about same sex marriage as it is not a visible topic in the society. Furthermore, they aim to engage in coalition building by encouraging a board member to have meeting with the key politicians, businesses, media and educators.

The session came to an end with representatives from Cambodia looking forward to amend the constitution by 2022. They had shared that their strategy would be to work with volunteers as they will have an opportunity to utilize the ideas of the younger generation who are open minded. The representatives also shared that they would be working with universities and women's rights organizations to build relationships. As for fundraising, they shared that they do not have a problem or any issue with raising funds but they have to focus on coordinating funds so that they can mobilize enough allies to stick to the same goal. All in All, they need to bring positive energy and positive messages to the general public as well as key influencers due to which they would be working with universities and artists that can bring a harmonious relationship all parties.

The conference ended with Evan and Thalia encouraging all the representatives to stay connected with each other and form a network in order to share their successes and challenges for everyone to learn from. Moreover, Evan had highlighted that the real key to win marriage is to first lay a strong foundation which can take many years. Shortly after, Midnight had thanked everyone for joining the meeting and sharing their experiences with each other. There were bitter-sweet goodbyes as everyone left with countless memories and a refueled quest to get out there and do their parts to create a better, more inclusive society for the LGBTIQ community.



## Conclusion and Summary of Recommendations

The three day conference revolved around Marriage Equality with contributions from Freedom to marry. The key takeaways from the conference were

- Importance of Clarity of Goal and Strategy
- Elements of a successful Campaign
- Fundraising
- Utilizing the online as well as offline platform

As the participants together produced the goals for Marriage Equality which were:

- Coalition Building
- Increasing Public Support
- Reaching their goal of legalizing marriage equality by their respective years
- Building relationship with key influencers

It can be concluded from the key takeaways of the conference that clarity of a strategy and the goal is very important as the rest of the decision making can be done in the right direction if everyone is focused on the goal. Moreover, as Evan had shared earlier; to ensure that the campaign is successful, it is important to also ensure that the four elements are also executed successfully the four elements involve - the constitution, movement, strategy and the campaign itself. Furthermore, fundraising is also seen as one of the most difficult parts of running the campaign as there has to be a lot of public education and support before people would be willing to donate. Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that the high end and institutional donors usually take part towards the end as they need to see that the campaign has been successful and so they have higher levels of confidence. In addition, making sure that the offline events are well connected to the online platform in order to encourage more engagement.

All in All, the representatives from different countries had shared their plans regarding coalition Building with key influencers and the various ways they would like to increase public support such as – house parties, concerts etc. Furthermore, every representative had also shared their goal for marriage equality in their respective country by stating a year while also giving reasons as to why it can take that long.

Towards the end of the third day of the meeting, Evan had recommended all the participants to always be working on reaching their goal on a day – to – day basis rather than holding meetings and seminars when there is a crisis because if there is progress made every day, it will be easier to deal with issues and problems.



## Participants

No.	Name	Organization	Country
1.	Kittinun Daramdhaj	RSAT	Thailand
2.	Pongthorn Chanlearn	Mplus	Thailand
3.	Nada Chaipayjit	SOGIESC Independent Advocate	Thailand
4.	Nattaphan Wannasiri	RSAT	Thailand
5.	Nareeluc Pairchaiyapoom	Ministry of Justice	Thailand
6.	Pisey Ly	Rainbow Community Kampuchea	Cambodia
7.	Raksmei Tuy	Rainbow Community Kampuchea	Cambodia
8.	Tran Khac Tung	ICS Center	Vietnam
9.	Le Phan Anh Thu	Institute for Studies of Society, Economy and Environment	Vietnam
10.	Ngo Le Phuong Linh	ICS Center	Vietnam
11.	BJ ECO	LAGABLAB Network	Philippines
12.	Pastor Cristopher Joseph San Jose	Open Table Metropolitan Community Church	Philippines
13.	Masa Yanagisawa	Human Rights Watch Japan	Japan
14.	Makiko Terahara	Tokyo Omotesando LPC	Japan
15.	Minhee Ryu	Gagoonet, Korean Network of Partnerships and Marriage Rights of LGBT	South Korea
16.	Jennifer Lu	Marriage Equality Coalition Taiwan	Taiwan
17.	Joyce Teng	Marriage Equality Coalition Taiwan	Taiwan
18.	Victoria Hsu	Taiwan Alliance to Promote Civil Partnership Rights	Taiwan
19.	Ah Qiang	PFLAG China	China
20.	Ying Xin (Xiao Te)	Beijing LGBT Center	China



No.	Name	Organization	Country
21.	Yanhui Peng ("Yanzi")	LGBT Rights Advocacy China	China
22.	Gigi Chao	Chuek Nang	Hong Kong
23.	Azan Marwah	Gilt Chambers	Hong Kong
24.	Jerome Yau	Pink Alliance	Hong Kong
25.	Sih Cheng Du	Taiwan Tongzhi (LGBTQ+) Hotline Association	Taiwan
26.	Mrs. Surat Turcot	Interpreter	Interpreter
27.	Masiri Anamarn	Interpreter	Interpreter
28.	Rahul Arora	Rapporteur	Rapporteur
29.	Alex Greenwich	Australian Marriage Equality	Facilitator
30.	Evan Wolfson	Freedom to Marry	Facilitator
31.	Thalia Zepatos	Freedom to Marry	Facilitator
32.	Cameron Tolle	Freedom to Marry	Facilitator
33.	Michael Kirby	APCOM Ambassador	APCOM Ambassador
34.	Natilma Suayngam	APCOM	APCOM staff
35.	Midnight Poonkasetwattana	APCOM	APCOM staff
36.	Michael Badorrek	APCOM	APCOM staff
37.	Kularb Khontaisong	APCOM	APCOM staff
38.	Adam Knobel	Australian Marriage Equality	Facilitator
39.	Kerdchoke Kasamwongjit	Rights and Liberties Protection Department	Thailand
40.	Supanat Kaewlek	N/A	Thailand
41.	Jesus Falcis	N/A	Philippines





No.	Name	Organization	Country
42.	Epeli Iyailatkau	FIJI	FIJI
43.	Selvan Antony	APCOM	Thailand
44.	Dowha Kim	ILGA ASIA	South Korea
45.	Rangsit S.	APCOM	Thailand
46.	Wattana Keingpa	APCOM	Thailand
47.	Sunadda Samana	APCOM	Thailand
48.	Chattraphan D.	RLPD	Thailand

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*We are united in advocating for issues around HIV and those that advance the rights, health and well being of people of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics.*

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