

DIGNITY, EQUALITY, FREEDOM

Iranti's Quarterly Newsletter

DECRIMINALISATION EDITION

Welcome, dear reader, to Iranti's quarterly newsletter!

Long-time followers of Iranti's work may be familiar with our ZwaKala Speaks! Newsletter, which documented some of Iranti's work under the ZwaKala Project banner. With the end of the ZwaKala Project came the end of that newsletter series, but through that work we learned the value of updating our community on our work, both in terms of public advocacy and "behind the scenes". We also noticed the newsletter provided an opportunity to highlight and celebrate some of the wonderful projects being undertaken by our allies in Gauteng, Limpopo and the North West Province.

We didn't want to lose such a valuable tool, and have spent some time thinking of how to expand upon it, to bring it to wider audiences and showcase a wider range of work. As an organisation with a Pan-African mandate, and allies across the region, it only made sense to create a platform to focus on our region; our continent; our home.

We cannot do it without you, though. This is as much a newsletter for and by our community as it is this organisation's. If you have any stories you want to tell, or brilliant activists and organisation's you'd like to profile, send your pitch to kellyn@iranti.org.za, or contact us at (+27)113391476, providing a sample of written work, if applicable.

Deadlines for the next submission are 6 September. Upcoming theme: Healthcare and Wellness

UPDATES FROM IRANTI

One may think that after 7 years of activism we'd have things down pat, but the ever-shifting advocacy landscape, the ongoing need to maintain the wellness of the team, and the ever-present human rights violations and democratic backsliding in our region, means that for every challenge we overcome, ten more await us.

The key is resilience, adaptability and passion. These are the qualities which bring about meaningful and positive change. Since the start of this year we have seen the decriminalisation of homosexuality in two African countries (Angola and Botswana), the legalisation of same-sex marriage in Ecuador and Taiwan and the criminalisation of homophobia and transphobia in Brazil. We have seen South Africa's very own Caster Semenya tried and banned from competing in the IAAF, only for Swiss courts to strike down the ruling as discriminatory. Right now, all across the globe, LGBTI+ Pride marches are taking place with hundreds of thousands of ordinary people making themselves visible 50 years after the first Pride March in New York. 2019, for all its trials, has been a year of progress, and we know this trend will continue!

NEW WEBSITE

2019 has also been a year of renewal for Irantí. This year saw the renovation and relaunch of our website: www.iranti.org.za. Our new design merges a modern, vibrant aesthetic with easy navigability, and offers our followers, funders and community a portal to all our work.

Some features of the new site include:

- **Featured Articles** – A curated selection of our biggest stories
- **Newsfeed** – Our work, easily searchable and accessible
- **Publications** – Newsletters, research reports and educational resources
- **Events** – The best way to keep up to date with upcoming events by Irantí and our partners
- **Donate** – You know what to do. Every cent counts!

We hope everyone will take a moment to explore our beautiful new site and subscribe for updates!

PUBLICATIONS

Irantí's [2018-2019 Annual Report](#) is out! Detailing the organisation's work over the past financial year.

Content includes:

- Who we are as Irantí
- Our documentation and projects
- Work within the community
- Team wellness
- In Memoriam: A tribute to those we have lost
- Irantí statistics
- Auditor report and financial positioning

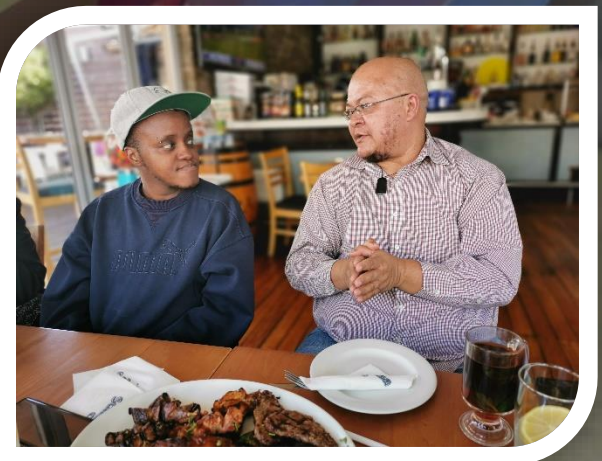
STAFF

This year we were excited to announce the election of our Executive Director, Jabulani Pereira, to the Board of ILGA World, and are thankful to the global LGBTI+ community for entrusting us with the position. It is testament to the quality of Irantí's work, and Jabulani's caliber as an organiser and activist.

We also welcomed several new members to the team who have joined us on a part-time basis:

- Anthea Seafeld, our HR Specialist
- Wendy Kessman, our Grants Writing Specialist
- Tyrone Parks, our Programme Coordinator
- Alethea Ayogu, our newest intern from Bard College, New York

Sadly, we must also say farewell to some team members as they undertake their own exciting new projects. Joshua Sehoole, Lihle Ngcobozi and Sandisiwe Dlamini will be leaving us soon. We wish them the best on their new paths. They will forever be part of the Irantí family.



GOODBYE JOSHUA:

Executive Director Jabulani Pereira toasts Joshua Sehoole

NEWS FROM THE REGION



Angola decriminalises homosexuality: The first country to do so in 2019!

In an historic ruling, Angolan lawmakers voted to strike the colonial era “vices against nature” law, which has long been interpreted as a law against same-sex relations, and used to discriminate against and persecute LGBT persons for decades. The vote, held on 23 January, means that homosexuality will no longer be criminalised in Angola. This makes Angola the first nation in 2019 to decriminalise homosexuality. [\[READ MORE\]](#)



On decriminalisation in Botswana: Homosexuality is not “unAfrican”

The following piece by Letlhogonolo Mokgoroane was originally published on New Frame:

Just before midday on 11 June 2019, many LGBTQIA+ activists were glued to their cellphones, refreshing Twitter feeds, following activists in Botswana as the court read the ruling to decriminalise same-sex relations. The ruling comes just a month after Kenya’s high court upheld its laws criminalising homosexuality. [\[READ MORE\]](#)

Decolonising discriminatory laws

The following piece by Nigel Patel, who featured in Iranti’s 2017 Trans Webseries project, was originally published in The Nation:

In 2003, the Botswana Court of Appeal’s Kanane case held that the time had “not yet arrived to decriminalise homosexual practices”. However, the recent Botswana High Court ruling states the “time has come that private same sexual intimacy between adults must be decriminalised”. In doing so, the court emphasises the fluidity and flexibility of culture. By accepting that its laws need to provide for the realities of dynamic African sexualities and genders, the decriminalisation of consensual same-sex relationships is Botswana decolonising. [\[READ MORE\]](#)

Decriminalisation in our time: Iranti’s upcoming documentary

Over the course of court proceedings, Iranti has maintained a presence in order to document Botswana’s journey toward decriminalisation. Iranti has been working on this project in collaboration with Puo Pha Productions, which had a film crew present during the handing down of the verdict.

“It’s not often that I find myself at a historical moment like this judgement was, it was overwhelming and almost surreal,” says Vincent Moloi of Puo Pha Productions. [\[READ MORE\]](#)



Kenya upholds criminalization: A response from Neo Musangi

The High Court in Kenya chose to uphold a piece of legislation that criminalises ‘carnal knowledge against the order of nature’ as stipulated in the country’s British colonial-era Penal Code. This was lauded by many in the conservative country as a “moral” judgement, but represents a blow to the country’s LGBTIQ+ community. [\[READ MORE\]](#)

Iranti heads to CFCS VII in Kenya

The 7th edition of the Changing Faces Changing Spaces (CFCS VII) conference hosted by UHAI EASHR took place in Kenya from the 19th to the 21st of July 2019 with the theme Visibility, Voice, Freedom. The conference brought together varied voices and activists from the African region as well international donors and funders. The conference also brought together LGBTI activists as well activists working on the rights and protections of sex workers in Africa. With the repealing of Section 164 of the Penal Code in Botswana which criminalised same sex relations, the conference provided the space for a regional and global conversation on strategies, learnings, and approaches many activists may use in their legal processes for the fight for decriminalisation. [\[READ MORE\]](#)



Looking back: Does decriminalisation matter?

On 18 May 2016, a bill was approved by the Parliament of Seychelles to repeal the anti-sodomy law in section 151 of the island nation's penal code. One year later, Iranti-org spoke to local activist, Ronny Arnephy on the state of LGBTI rights on the island nation, in order to understand what progress has been made in the months since the ruling. For many, the act of legal decriminalisation is an important step toward equality and recognition of LGBTI+ lived experiences. For others, legislation on paper doesn’t always feel like it translates into a better life. [\[WATCH VIDEO\]](#)



Voices from the region: We are the Blueprint

In March 2019, Iranti, in partnership with EATHAN and RFSL, hosted the RFSL Rainbow Academy training on leadership. 19 transgender-rights activists from across Southern and East Africa were brought to Johannesburg to share knowledge, give insight into their local issues and contacts, and gain valuable new skills to help finance, promote and ensure the sustainability of their respective organisations. The opportunity to network with other African activists, and strengthen bonds across borders, proved invaluable. [\[WATCH VIDEO\]](#)

FOR THE LOVE OF BOOKS!

Transgender Refugees and the Imagined South Africa: Discussing B Camminga's latest book



B Camminga answers questions at their official book launch

This year, academic, activist and friend of Iranti, B Camminga, became the first openly trans person from the African continent to obtain their PhD. Their research project culminated in the publication of a book entitled "Transgender Refugees and the Imagined South Africa: Bodies Over Borders and Borders Over Bodies".

The book, Camminga uses the stories of several transgender and gender-diverse migrants and refugees to explore broader themes of humanity, personhood, and how we might better understand gendered experiences outside of Western and anglophone terminologies.

Iranti recently posed some questions to Camminga to get deeper into the book, and their work as a queer academic in Africa. [\[READ MORE\]](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **LBQ Women's Conference (6 – 9 July 2019)**

The first Global LBQ (Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer) Women's Conference will be taking place in Cape Town, South Africa. Iranti will be sending three team members to interact and share knowledge with over 500 other participants from across the globe on issues facing queer women and solutions in organising and advocacy. The theme for the conference is "Leading – Healing – Transforming". For more information contact lbqwomenglobalconference@gmail.com.

- **Transgender healthcare video screenings and workshops**

Iranti is in discussion with a number of healthcare professionals and facilities to initiate a series of trainings for improved sensitivity when dealing with transgender patients, and increased competencies with regard to providing gender-affirming healthcare, such as Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT). The trainings will be based on a four-part video series aimed at educating medical professionals, produced by Iranti and available on request for use in any educational setting. For enquiries please contact kellyn@iranti.org.za.

CONTACT US

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For newsletter or communications queries, complaints or suggestions, please reach out to our Writer and Social Media Officer, Kellyn Botha at kellyn@iranti.org.za. General enquiries can be directed to getinfo@iranti.org.za or (+27)11 339 1476.

Edition 2's theme is healthcare and wellness. If you or anyone you know would like to pitch or submit stories to Iranti, please reach out to Kellyn Botha at kellyn@iranti.org.za by 6 September 2019.

