

## I AM ALL THOSE GIRLS WHO GOT KICKED OUT OF THEIR HOUSE.

Relation among early departures of children and adolescents and the disrespect of their caregivers in the face of transgressions of traditional gender roles in Dominican Republic.

### Summary

Dominican Republic ranks among the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean with figures above the regional average according to the ENHOGAR-MICS 2014 Survey<sup>1</sup>, regarding the fact that 35.9% of young women (between 20 and 24 years old) were married or united before the age of 18 and 12.3% were married or united before the age of 15.

Although the Dominican Republic is an upper middle-income country, the incidence of child marriage is similar to that of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. In the region, the average is 39% of girls and adolescents who marry before the age of 18 and 12% before the age of 15.

The studies carried out do not consider relationships between people of the same gender, in addition to the different gender identities that transgress heteronormativity.

To learn about the impact of early marriages and unions on this population we proposed to conduct surveys conducted by members of the same population of lesbians, bisexuals, queers and trans men; and focus groups were conducted with people selected from the surveys as well as people who did not participate in the surveys and 28 people participated in these focus groups. Data on female-assigned individuals at birth with different sexual orientations and gender identities were collected from surveys of 53 individuals and 3 focus groups of female-assigned individuals at birth from the LGBTQ population.

The analysis of the positive relationship between the early exits of children and adolescents and the disrespect of their caregivers for transgressions of traditional gender roles in the Dominican Republic reveals that the average age range of the population was between 21 and 25 years of age, specifically those from the sectors of Santo Domingo that were studied, 55% of whom had attained a high school level of education.

Regarding their sexual orientation, 45% reported being lesbians, 47% bisexuals and 6% heterosexuals. The call for participation was addressed to lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LBTQ) people. However, due to the fact that it was related to revealing their sexual orientation and gender identity, which represented a limitation at the time of the approach, representing 2%.

Our study recommends designing strategies and programs related to children's rights and prevention of abuse and mistreatment for families in the communities. Because we found that an alarming majority of lesbian, queer, bisexual, and transgender participants left home under the age of 12, more than half of whom experienced some type of violence. Due to our retrospective assessment of experiences reported

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<sup>1</sup> National Multipurpose Household Survey -Multiple Indicator Survey by Conglomerates (ENHOGAR, in Spanish)

during adulthood, these reflect structural problems that affect childhood. This suggests that opportunities should be created for study, promotion, support, facilitation, and accompaniment to schooling, as well as reinforcing the provision of culturally appropriate educational sessions on transgression of traditional gender roles for families, through civil society organizations.