

# GLEN

Evaluation of the Building Sustainable  
Change Programme

Report on Findings and Recommendations

December 2010



At PA Consulting Group, we **transform** the performance of organisations.

We put together teams from many disciplines and backgrounds to tackle the most complex problems facing our clients, working with leaders and their staff to turn around organisations in the private and public sectors. Clients call on us when they want:

an **innovative** solution: counter-intuitive thinking and groundbreaking solutions

a highly **responsive** approach: we listen, and then we act decisively and quickly

**delivery** of hard results: we get the job done, often trouble-shooting where previous initiatives have failed.

We are an independent, employee-owned, global firm of 3,000 talented individuals, operating from offices across the world, in Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia, and Oceania. We have won numerous awards for delivering complex and highly innovative assignments, run one of the most successful venture programmes in our industry, have technology development capability that few firms can match, deep expertise across key industries and government, and a unique breadth of skills from strategy to IT to HR to applied technology.

- defence • energy • financial services • government and public services • international development
  - life sciences and healthcare • manufacturing • postal services • retail • telecommunications • transportation
- 
- strategic management • innovation and technology • IT • operational improvement
  - human resources • complex programme delivery

## Delivering business transformation

# Introduction

This evaluation of the GLEN Strategic Plan *Building Sustainable Change 2006 - 2010* was commissioned by GLEN from PA Consulting in 2010. The evaluation was completed in the autumn of 2010. The evaluation findings have informed the development of the GLEN Strategic Plan 2011 – 2016, which has been part-funded by Atlantic Philanthropies.

Copies of all reports referred to within the Evaluation can be found on the GLEN website [www.glen.ie](http://www.glen.ie)



GLEN – Gay and Lesbian Equality Network  
2 Exchange St Up  
Dublin 8  
Ireland

+353 1 6728650  
[info@glen.ie](mailto:info@glen.ie)  
[www.glen.ie](http://www.glen.ie)

# Contents

|          |   |           |
|----------|---|-----------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>GLEN's strategic approach</b>                        | <b>4</b>  |
| 1.1      | A growing evidence base for shaping policy and strategy | 4         |
| 1.2      | A new chapter for GLEN                                  | 4         |
| 1.3      | Strategic ambition of the BSC Programme                 | 5         |
| 1.4      | Purpose and approach to this evaluation                 | 7         |
| 1.5      | Structure of evaluation report                          | 8         |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Progress - Legislation and Policy</b>                | <b>9</b>  |
| 2.1      | What GLEN set out to do                                 | 9         |
| 2.2      | What was achieved                                       | 10        |
| 2.3      | GLEN's role and impact                                  | 12        |
| 2.4      | Media and public profile                                | 15        |
| 2.5      | GLEN's international role                               | 15        |
| 2.6      | Conclusions   | 16        |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Progress - Education and Health</b>                  | <b>18</b> |
| 3.1      | What GLEN set out to achieve                            | 18        |
| 3.2      | What was achieved - Education                           | 19        |
| 3.3      | What was achieved - Health                              | 22        |
| 3.4      | GLEN's role and impact                                  | 24        |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Progress - Sustainable Communities and Workplace</b> | <b>26</b> |
| 4.1      | What GLEN set out to achieve                            | 26        |
| 4.2      | What has been achieved - Building LGBT capacity         | 27        |
| 4.3      | GLEN's role and impact                                  | 29        |
| <b>5</b> | <b>GLEN's model of working</b>                          | <b>31</b> |
| 5.1      | Strengths of GLEN's approach                            | 31        |
| 5.2      | Challenges arising from its working model               | 36        |
| 5.3      | Conclusion  | 38        |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Conclusions and future themes</b>                    | <b>39</b> |
| 6.1      | GLEN's contribution to achieving the BSC Programme      | 39        |
| 6.2      | Strengths of its approach                               | 41        |
| 6.3      | Key Lessons and strategic pointers                      | 42        |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Appendix A: Consultation programme</b> | <b>45</b> |
| <b>Appendix B: References</b>             | <b>47</b> |



# 1 GLEN's strategic approach

GLEN (Gay and Lesbian Equality Network) has commissioned this external, independent evaluation to assess its progress in achieving the aims set out in the Building Sustainable Change Programme. This set out an ambitious programme of change to achieve equality for LGB people. In this section we outline the context for the evaluation, our approach to it, and the structure of the report.

## 1.1 A growing evidence base for shaping policy and strategy

There are no firm figures on the number of LGB<sup>1</sup> people in Ireland as data on sexual orientation has not yet been collated in the Census. Estimates of the number of LGB people in Ireland vary from 4 - 7% of the population. While the number of LGB people may not be firmly established, the growing body of research on LGB people in Ireland is showing that they face considerable discrimination issues. This research base is beginning to provide an important platform for organisations working for LGB people to promote equality. The challenge facing organisations like GLEN (Gay and Lesbian Equality Network) are significant. The core question is how they can maximise their influence and resources to have most impact on the lives of LGB people.

## 1.2 A new chapter for GLEN

The Building Sustainable Change (BSC) Programme marked a new and critical departure for GLEN. GLEN was first set up in 1988 as a policy and advocacy body for LGB people. It could claim a significant role in contributing to the decriminalisation of homosexuality in 1993, and in the subsequent development of equality legislation (1998 - 2004) through the Employment Equality and Equal Status Acts. Sexual orientation was included as one of the nine anti-discrimination grounds in the legislation. This provided legislative recognition of the equality rights of LGB people and provided a platform for future work by the Equality Authority on sexual orientation, notably its 2002 report on *Implementing Equality for Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals*. However, up to 2005, GLEN was essentially a voluntary organisation with a single funded post working on gay HIV strategies which was funded by the HSE. It operated mainly through its Board and their voluntary contributions to influence policy and strategy. GLEN subsequently received funding from the Atlantic Philanthropies to fund their BSC Programme. This funding helped GLEN to leverage additional funding to implement the Programme including funding from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to fund its Director of Policy Change role.

---

<sup>1</sup> GLEN is a national policy organisation primarily focused on the issue of sexual orientation and advancing equality for lesbian, gay and bisexual people. Many issues faced by lesbian, gay and bisexual people also impact on transgender people and GLEN have brought transgender people in different aspects of their work including working with Transgender Equality Network Ireland.

The agreement with the Atlantic Philanthropies to fund the BSC Programme marked a significant 'gear change' in GLEN's development. For the first time, it had a fully developed strategic plan to advance equality for LGB people with the resources to put it on a professional footing. As a prelude to funding the full BSC Programme, the Atlantic Philanthropies provided 'seed' funding so that GLEN could develop its strategic programme and begin to resource the organisation (€266,000 in 2004/05). This 'seed' funding enabled GLEN to recruit a Director and Administrator and to develop the BSC Programme to a point where it could be funded as an investment programme. Atlantic committed over €2m to GLEN for the 5 year programme which outlined an ambitious change agenda to advance equality for LGB people. The programme essentially formalised and put a structure on what had been an intuitive strategic process for GLEN up to then.

### 1.3 Strategic ambition of the BSC Programme

The critical drivers shaping GLEN's strategic ambition can be traced back to the Equality Authority report on *Implementing Equality for Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals*, and the subsequent report by the National Economic and Social Forum (NESF) on *Implementation Issues*. The Equality Authority report identified a comprehensive programme of change with nine priorities:

- Community Development and empowerment (10 actions).
- Equality proofing (5 actions).
- Relationship recognition (11 actions). These actions mainly referred to entitlements and protections and advocated systematic reform of the legal and policy code to reflect the diversity of family forms.
- Health (11 actions) including monitoring the relationship between sexual orientation and suicide and specific needs of LGB people in relation to mental health.
- Education (12 actions) including homophobic bullying, curricula for RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education), CPSE (Civil Political and Social Education) and SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education).
- Youth services (12 actions).
- Employment and training (11 actions) mainly covering the role of trade unions and employers to build inclusive workplaces.
- Services (7 actions).
- Violence and Harassment (9 actions).

The subsequent NESF report identified implementation issues, concluding that they would not have substantial cost implications. The critical requirement was a change of mindset and a more inclusive approach in designing and delivering policies and services to reflect the needs of LGB people. The programme of change articulated in the Equality Authority and NESF reports was the foundation for GLEN's BSC Programme.

**Figure 1.1 Overview of GLEN's strategic ambitions and link to wider social and societal change**

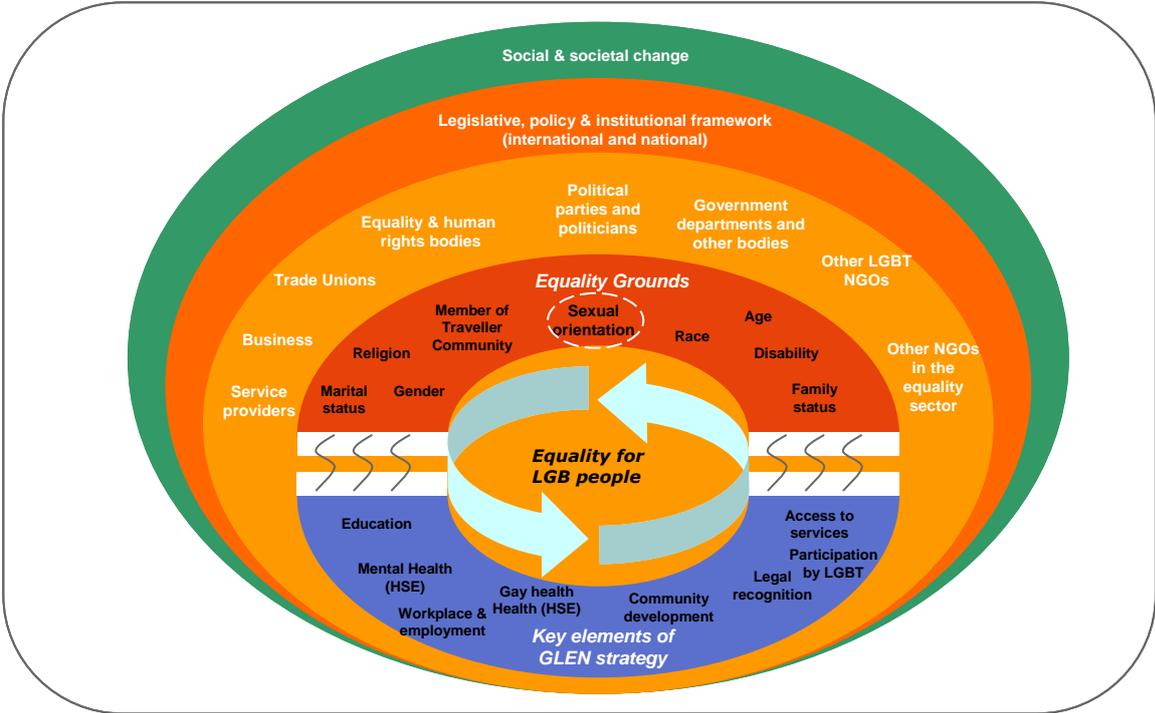


Figure 1.1 outlines GLEN's overall strategic ambition and key elements of its strategy outlined in the BSC Programme. Essentially GLEN has focused on the following strategic priorities:

- Legislative and policy change with the dominant focus on legal recognition on the basis of equality.
- Progressing mainstream services - particularly in relation to the education and health sectors. Its work in health service delivery revolves mainly, but not exclusively, around mental health and is funded by the HSE.
- Promoting safe and inclusive work environments. This was reflected in a number of GLEN objectives under the BSC Programme and has since been elevated as a separate priority.
- Building sustainable development structures.

This represented an ambitious programme of change particularly within a five year period. GLEN is a policy and strategy NGO and explicitly not involved in service delivery. This is not because there is no need for this role - NESF underlined the importance of needs for LGB people being incorporated in mainstream services. GLEN has clearly positioned itself in the policy space, recognising that other LGB organisations are involved in service delivery.

## 1.4 Purpose and approach to this evaluation

An explicit commitment in the BSC Programme was to conduct an external evaluation at the end of the five year period. The programme indicated that the evaluation should draw upon GLEN's internal self-evaluation system (SPEAK system) but should also feature an extensive programme of consultation with GLEN's key stakeholders. GLEN commissioned PA Consulting Group to conduct this evaluation. The aim of the evaluation process was threefold as summarised in figure 1.2:

**Figure 1.2 Overview of evaluation aims and approach**

| Evaluation aim   | Approach  |
|--|---|
| To review the progress made in delivering on the aims of the BSC Programme.                        | This involved reviewing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the outputs from GLEN's self-evaluation system (SPEAK)</li> <li>• other management reports and internal documents such as annual reports, reports to the Atlantic Philanthropies, internal notes on policy and strategy development and progress</li> <li>• external reports commissioned by GLEN</li> <li>• other relevant published documentation e.g, reports of the Equality Authority and the NESF. These are referenced in appendix B.</li> </ul> |
| To establish the most effective strategic and working methods in delivering on the progress made.  | This involved an extensive consultation programme with stakeholders from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government departments and politicians</li> <li>• Other LGBT organisations</li> <li>• Social partners - trade unions and business interests.</li> </ul>  |
| To derive from this analysis strategic and operational pointers to inform the future work of GLEN. | This involved synthesising the findings from the first two phases above and distilling the findings into conclusions covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the contribution of GLEN to achieving progress</li> <li>• strengths and limitations of its approach</li> <li>• key lessons and strategic pointers to inform future work.</li> </ul>   |

The evaluation coincided with a period of intense strategic planning by GLEN to develop its strategic priorities for 2011 - 2015. It also coincided with the final enactment by the Oireachtas of the Civil Partnership Bill.

The focus of the evaluation has centred on an extensive process of engagement with GLEN's key stakeholders (Appendix A includes a full list of organisations that we consulted). The key purpose of the evaluation was for GLEN to learn from its experience in implementing the BSC Programme and to apply these lessons to its future activities. The consultation programme therefore provides important feedback to GLEN on what its impact has been and how it needs to evolve over the coming years. It is clearly evident, particularly with the enactment of the Civil Partnership Bill, that significant progress has been achieved in advancing equality for LGB people since 2005. The core question for GLEN is to understand its contribution to progress achieved - how its role was viewed by others and how effective was its model of working. A key strand of our discussion with stakeholders was therefore to understand GLEN's specific contribution to progress and factors contributing to, or limiting its role.

## 1.5 Structure of evaluation report

The findings from this evaluation are structured as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Progress achieved - Legislation and Policy
3. Progress achieved - Education and Health
4. Progress achieved - Community development, workforce and employment
5. GLEN's model of working
6. Conclusions and future priorities.

The sections on progress achieved (2 - 4) follow a similar format. We identify planned outcomes in the BSC Programme, what was achieved, GLEN's role and impact in achieving progress. In reality there is considerable connection and overlap across each of the BSC Programme priorities with complementary, supporting actions. This was also evident to GLEN's stakeholders most of whom underlined the 'connectedness' of its strands of work. For presentation purposes, we have separated them out to highlight distinct areas of progress.



## 2 Progress - Legislation and Policy

GLEN had a singular focus on securing legislative and policy change particularly in relation to partnership legislation on the basis of equality. In this chapter we outline what GLEN set out to achieve, what was achieved, and GLEN's role in achieving it.

### 2.1 What GLEN set out to do

The overarching and dominant focus of GLEN's work has been to secure legislative and policy change. This is not to understate its other priorities outlined in the BSC programme. Rather it underlines the central ethos of GLEN to ensure that the policy and legislative infrastructure supports equality for LGB people and drives social change. Prior to the BSC Programme, GLEN played a key role in decriminalising homosexuality (1993) and the equality legislation (1998). Its aim under the BSC Programme was to build on the lessons from its previous policy and advocacy work to tackle profound inequalities in the legal framework. In many ways its approach to policy and legislative change defines its overall philosophy and strategic approach to social change.

The BSC Programme set out an agenda of policy and legislative change that included 18 actions and 14 outcomes - short, medium and long-term. Its planned outcomes can be categorised in two core strategic areas as outlined in figure 2.1:

**Figure 2.1 Overview of planned outcomes - Legislation and Policy**

| Strategic area  | Planned outcomes and BSC Reference  |
|---|---|
| LGB partnership legislation, equality policy and normalisation as well as related matters such as parenting, pensions and immigration residency rules | <b>Short-term</b>   |
|   | Progress towards legal recognition on the basis of equality i.e. marriage (S2.1)              |
|   | Matters related to same sex partnership (S2.2)  |
|   | Change to immigration/residency rules (S2.3)  |
|   | <b>Medium-term</b>  |
|   | Progress by the Equality Authority on positive action for full equality for LGB people (M2.1) |
|   | Speedy Government transposition on EU rules impacting LGBT people (M2.2)                      |
| <b>Long-term</b>  |   |
|   | The 'normalisation' of legal recognition for same sex couples (L2.1)                          |
| Participation by LGBT people in   | <b>Medium-term</b>  |
|   | Real progress in involving LGB community in policy and planning (M2.3)                        |

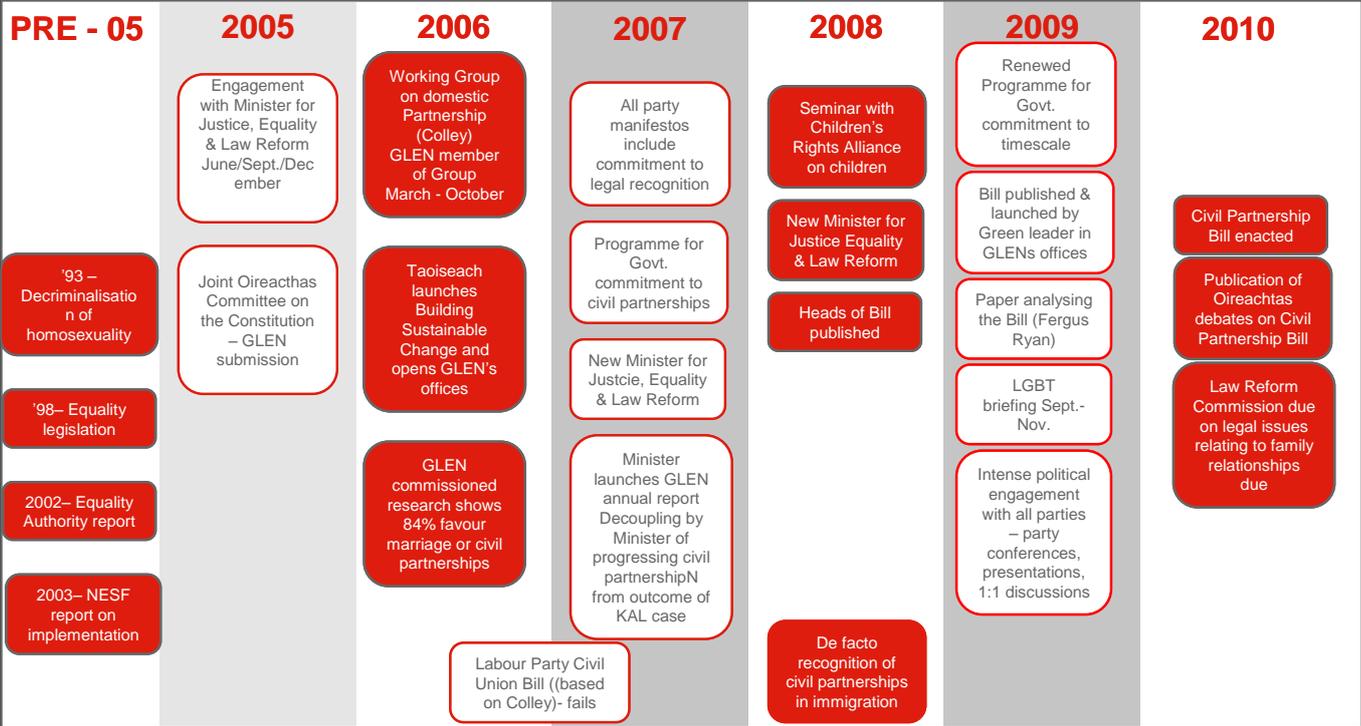
| Strategic area  | Planned outcomes and BSC Reference   |
|---|--|
| policy fora and building and recognition of their contribution. This includes influence at international level as well as creating environment making it easier for people to be visibly out. | Significant increase in groups accessing funding (M2.4)  |
|   | More involvement by LGB groups in influencing EU and international law and policy (M2.5)   |
|   | More organisations with informed policies on sexual orientation (M2.5)   |
|   | Evidence that those responsible for social planning recognise and value the economic and social contribution that LGB people and businesses make to the community (M2.6) |
|   | <b>Long-term</b>   |
|   | LGB interests represented on relevant government bodies e.g. the Equality Authority and the Irish Human Rights Commission (L2.2)   |
|   | Significant increase in number of LGB people 'visibly out' in all areas of Irish life (L2.3)   |
|   | Increase in number of mainstream services adapted and accessible to LGB people (L2.4)  |

To support the achievement of each of these outcomes, the BSC Programme also identified specific actions. A central element of GLEN's approach was the recognition that it could not achieve progress on its own and that this could only be achieved in partnership with others. In the following section we outline progress under both of its strategic areas.

## 2.2 What was achieved

The central element of GLEN's strategic approach has been securing legal recognition of same sex couples. The Civil Partnership Bill has now passed through all stages in the Oireachtas and has been signed by the President. Figure 2.2 charts the key milestones and events leading up to the enactment of the Bill. It is not the intention of this evaluation to assess the legislation itself or indeed to recount the full story of how the legislation was enacted. The purpose is to assess GLEN's role and the factors that contributed to its enactment.

**Figure 2.1 Key milestones in enactment of the Civil Partnership Bill**



The 2003 NESF report identified legislation securing partnership rights for same sex couples as the equality issue facing most implementation challenges. It recognised the complex issues involved in adopting any legislation and the consequent time lag to enact this type of intricate legislation. However, it also recognised that the extension of partnership rights to same sex couples 'would have a profound impact on achieving equality for this group.'

Most people consulted during this evaluation regard the enactment of the Civil Partnership Bill as a significant milestone in equality for LGB people. Advocates of the legislation see it as a critical step in achieving full marriage for LGB people and a defining point in laying the foundation for more profound social change. Most of the stakeholders consulted acknowledged that the model of Civil Partnership comes closest to full marriage - they also recognise that one of the key weaknesses in the legislation is that it does not include protections for the children of LGB couples. Lack of legal recognition for children of LGB people was consistently highlighted by GLEN from 2005. GLEN made a submission with LinC to the Colley Group on Lesbian and Gay Parenting. The Colley Group recommended that civil partners should be entitled to be considered as joint adoptive parents with the rights and welfare of children paramount. GLEN's work on the Colley Group and its submissions to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, the Law Reform Commission, underlined the need to provide legal protection for children of same sex couples. GLEN also highlighted the lack of recognition of children through a seminar organised with the Children's Rights Alliance in 2008 following publication of the Head of Bill. However, given the perceived complexity of these protection issues, they were not included in the civil partnership legislation.

Figure 2.1 highlights the significant political engagement and influence in the build-up to publication and enactment of the legislation. The period up to publication of the Bill in 2009 was essentially 'preparing the ground' and shaping the agenda. The really intense period of engagement was in 2009/2010. It should be emphasised that between 2005 and 2010 there were three Ministers for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, and two governments. This meant that GLEN had to engage with all parties to ensure that there was a smooth transition from the consensus emerging under the Fianna Fail/PD coalition government to the new Fianna Fail/Green Party coalition government. This was achieved, and underlined GLEN's deft approach to political consensus-building which was acknowledged by most stakeholders consulted.

The pace of progress on legislative reform may have felt inordinately slow to GLEN over the life of the BSC Programme. The first phase was in essence preparing the ground and shaping the agenda (2005 - 2008). The legislative phase was in reality completed within an exceptionally short timeframe given the complexity of the legislation and the potential for it to generate ideological opposition. The Heads of Bill were first discussed in June 2008, it went to second stage in December 2009 and passed all stages in July 2010. In essence, it passed through the Oireachtas within an 8 month period. This exceptional pace would not have been possible without the express commitment of the government parties to agreeing a timeline (articulated in the renewed Programme for Government in 2009) and adhering to it. The passage of the Bill was considered to be exceptionally swift by stakeholders, particularly considering its substance. There was also a view by most stakeholders that GLEN's approach would eventually be 'vindicated'.

## 2.3 GLEN's role and impact

There is strong evidence that the legislative framework has changed significantly with the enactment of the Civil Partnership Bill. The question for GLEN is how much can be attributed to its role. Clearly ultimate responsibility for legislative change rests with the Oireachtas and the government. In this context what precisely was GLEN's role?

A key finding from this evaluation is that GLEN had a critical role in shaping the legislation and in driving its progress. Findings from the consultation were that GLEN:

- **Created opportunities to engage with key decision-makers at the highest level.** Its engagement with the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Michael McDowell, in 2005 and with the former Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, in 2006, were consistently highlighted as important milestones signalling a commitment at the most senior level to secure legal recognition for same sex partners. Critically, GLEN both created and responded to opportunities to engage. GLEN has also engaged with the President, the Taoiseach, the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform at critical junctures over the five years. The importance of this engagement cannot be over-emphasised. It is clear from our consultation that they were significant events in preparing the ground and opening dialogue for social change. *The statements of both the former Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, and the former Taoiseach were consistently referred to by stakeholders as significant landmarks that paved the way for legislative change.*

- **Instrumental in setting up the Colley group and in shaping its conclusions.** The Working Group on Domestic Partnership (the Colley Group) was set up by the former Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform to consider options to give legal recognition to alternative forms of partnership. It was set up in March 2006 with a very tight reporting timeframe (October 2006). GLEN, through its Director of Policy Change, was the sole LGB representative on the Group. Its role has been acknowledged by members of the working group as central in helping to develop thinking of the Group and help it on its journey.
- **Perceived as a source of expertise and a resource on legal recognition by civil servants and politicians.** GLEN was routinely used as a 'sounding board' on legal recognition both by civil servants and politicians. It made a detailed submission to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform on the Heads of Bill. It also commissioned research on the Civil Partnership Bill and this research was used both to communicate with the LGB community and to inform the detailed provisions of the Bill.
- **Persistent, deliberate process of engagement and consensus-building with politicians.** The Bill was passed with all party support in the Oireachtas. GLEN undertook a deliberate strategy of engaging with politicians in particular to win over the middle ground while building on its support. They attended party conventions, made presentations to the Fianna Fail and Fine Gael parliamentary parties, met a very large number of members of the Oireachtas individually. All of the political parties included a commitment to legal recognition in their political manifestos which in itself underlined its political consensus-building. When the government changed, GLEN was able to shift its focus of influence with apparent ease. Their willingness to engage at this level, and recognition of its importance, was a central factor in helping advocates of the legislation to 'hold their nerve'.
- **Voice of reasonableness and pragmatism.** A consistent theme from the consultation was that GLEN was 'reasonable' to deal with - they understood the constraints that decision-makers and legislators faced and in particular the political dynamic around a potentially controversial piece of social legislation. Decision-makers understood that GLEN's preference was for full marriage for LGB people. However, the political view was that any legislative change to secure full marriage would be constitutionally vulnerable. Whether or not this was a correct interpretation of the Constitution can be contested. What cannot be disputed however is that there was no appetite at government level to legislate for full marriage. *Our clear understanding is that, had GLEN persisted with its preferred option (i.e. full marriage), civil partnership was at risk of going off the political agenda completely. GLEN understood this risk and made a calculated decision to pursue civil partnership and the legislative protections it brought.*

In summary, most stakeholders consulted were strongly of the view that GLEN's role was central in shaping and achieving legislative change. Most of the stakeholders consulted were also of the firm view that the model of Civil Partnership espoused in the Bill goes as far as possible towards marriage without being marriage.

## Implications and challenges

The civil partnership legislation has not been universally welcomed by the LGB community. It is strongly contested by some LGB people who advocate full marriage equality and do not see the tactical advantage of civil partnership as a stepping stone to full equality. Advocacy groups such as Marriage Equality and LGBT Noise were established specifically to lobby for full marriage equality. They have strong reservations about the current legislation both in principle, and in terms of its detailed provisions. This inevitably led to some tensions within the LGB community on strategy and tactics. For many stakeholders, this tension was helpful in terms of the broader political debate and may in fact have inadvertently helped GLEN's campaign with key influencers.

This strategic and tactical divergence between GLEN and some other LGB groups raises a number of important issues for GLEN to consider at this point:

- **How GLEN engages with LGB people:** There is some confusion and ambiguity among LGB people about GLEN's ambition for legal recognition. While GLEN itself has a stated preference for full marriage, with civil partnership as a stepping stone, this position is not clear or fully understood within the LGB community. GLEN engaged with LGB people in a number of ways including a conference organised jointly with the Equality Authority (2006) and its regional briefings in the latter half of 2009. However, this was felt by some to be 'too little and too late'. With the final enactment of the Bill, this divergence and confusion over GLEN's stance on legal recognition may become largely academic. However, it raises important questions for GLEN on how it engages with its different constituencies in particular with LGB people. GLEN engages with an extensive range of stakeholders, representing a number of constituencies. Our analysis of SPEAK, GLEN's internal self-reporting system, shows that GLEN has a significant level of interaction with LGB people (see figure 5.4). However, to secure legal recognition, its focus was deliberately towards decision-makers and policy-makers. This was a deliberate strategic choice by GLEN to build political support for the draft legislation. However, this tactic was not evident or understood by many of the groups advocating marriage. The consequence was that GLEN was perceived as 'giving in' by some LGBT people.
- **How GLEN is perceived:** There is a very clear distinction between how GLEN is viewed by policy-makers (social partners) and elements of the LGB community. There was a clear view by government and social partners consulted that GLEN is a model of how effective NGOs should operate. This was also shared by some LGB groups consulted who see GLEN's impact on policy and legislative change. GLEN also works on a range of other policy areas notably health, education and community development which impact on LGB people across the spectrum. Despite this, GLEN is perceived by some as an organisation that mainly serves the interests of gay, older men. Its wider span of activities is not fully recognised or understood.

Our clear sense from discussion with GLEN's staff, Board and stakeholders is that it took a highly tactical and strategic approach to securing the civil partnership legislation. Its primary focus was on the political 'constituency' rather than its own LGB constituency. GLEN recognised that there were risks associated with this approach as it was going to be difficult to manage communications with the political and LGB constituencies. However, in its calculation these risks were more than offset by the potential prize of equality rights through civil partnership. There have been consequences for GLEN in

terms of how it has been perceived by the LGB community. With the legislation now enacted there is an opportunity to build bridges across the LGB community to tackle outstanding legislative issues particularly in relation to children. The question of protection for children is recognised by GLEN and others as a critical issue and unfinished business in the legislative agenda.

## 2.4 Media and public profile

An important dimension of GLEN's work is to raise the profile of the LGB agenda and to contribute to shaping an environment where it is easier for LGB people to participate fully in society. The importance of this dimension of GLEN's work was underlined by the *Burning Issues* survey of LGB people. The survey highlighted that 'increased public visibility and positive media portrayals of LGBT people are key to tackling homophobia and improving the lives of LGBT people in Ireland'. GLEN has carefully managed the media to promote the LGB agenda. It has been proactive in developing its relationship with the media creating opportunities for them to report on GLEN's priority issues and a source of information on developments. These include launches of key documents by the former Taoiseach and various Ministers.

GLEN monitors its media presence and impact including editorial references and articles on its approach. It prepares MediaBooks to monitor activities capturing headlines of key media 'interventions' in 2008 (258 interventions) and 2009 (348 interventions). Of the 348 separate interventions logged in 2009:

- 179 were broadcasts (51%) spanning national (all main stations) and local media. The latter included East Coast Radio, Kildare FM, WLR FM, Tipp FM, LMFM, KCLR FM, Shannonside, Limerick 95FM, Galway Bay FM, South East Radio FM, Radio Kerry, Clare FM, Radio Ulster, Mid&NorthWest Radio, Cork 96FM, Dublin's Country Mix, Highland FM, Midlands 103, Northern Sound.
- 169 were press releases or references mainly in the national media, specialist publications including the Irish Catholic, the Law Society Gazette, Public Service Review, Irish Medical News and some provincial papers e.g. Donegal People's Press and Donegal Democrat.

For a small organisation, this represents significant media activity - almost 1 per day in 2009.

## 2.5 GLEN's international role

GLEN's dominant focus under the BSC Programme has been on the national arena. It has not applied the same focus to the EU and international arenas. There have been occasions when GLEN has engaged at international level but this tends to be reactive to opportunities that arise rather than a deliberate initiative on GLEN's part. Recent examples of international engagement have included support for ILGA on its recent Council of Europe campaign and representation at the UN examination of Ireland's record of political/civil rights.

GLENs connections with EU and international counterparts are under-developed. There are a number of international bodies such as ARC International, IGLHRC (International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission), and ILGA (International lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Association). These advocacy organisations work at international level to ensure that gender identity and sexual orientation feature in international legal framework. For example they have been actively campaigning on the Yogyakarta Principles to have them elevated as a standard on sexual orientation in UN treaties which are silent on sexual orientation.

This potentially represents a missed opportunity for GLEN to apply its lessons and experience to the LGB agenda internationally such as the agenda pursued by ARC, ILGA and IGLHRC. There is also significant and growing anxiety that in some jurisdictions LGB people are experiencing heightened discrimination because of changing political attitudes and legal protections. In these countries, the LGB agenda is becoming particularly vexed and contentious. An organisation like GLEN has the potential to be an important ally for LGB people whose human rights are threatened in other jurisdictions. Ireland has earned a recognised status as an honest broker at international level, particularly in developing countries and former colonies, with whom it has a natural empathy/affinity. A significant number of states that decriminalise gays are former British colonies. An organisation like GLEN with a proven record of achievement in Ireland through 'working' the political system, 'political savvy' and principled pragmatism, should be capable of transferring and applying those skills on the international arena effectively. Through years of experience in policy and strategy, it knows the positive and the negative pressure points that can influence change.

Engagement at international level would be an opportunity both to influence and learn. There is potential scope to build on GLEN's connections with its funder, the Atlantic Philanthropies, both to advance its own development and facilitate development of other NGOs through its experience. A priority for the Atlantic Philanthropies is to promote exchange and learning. GLEN are well-positioned to share their lessons and to learn from others through Atlantics' international and national networks.

## 2.6 Conclusions

There has been significant advance in the legal framework through the Civil Partnership Bill and this was GLEN's dominant focus. While GLEN's ambition was for marriage, it worked to secure a model of civil partnership that most closely approximated to marriage. This was based on its considered assessment that, had it held out for full marriage, there was a very real likelihood that any legislative change would have been off the agenda. GLEN's priority was to secure the best possible deal given its understanding of constraints. Our sense from the consultation was that this was a reasonable calculation on GLEN's part. However, this is clearly a contested position with some LGBT organisations taking a more 'purist' approach advocating full marriage compared to GLEN's more pragmatic approach. *It was very clear from our consultation that GLEN played a critical role in shaping and advancing the legislation, with a considered, calculated approach based on a finely attuned sense of how the machinery of government works.*

This evaluation also highlighted two further challenges for GLEN:

- Firstly to complete the legislative change programme by seeking legal protection for children in same-sex headed families. This is a significant and urgent priority which should be facilitated by the publication at the end of this year (2010) by the Law Reform Commission on its proposals.
- To consider how it engages with the LGBT community and manages the 'tension' that can inevitably spring from different tactical and strategic approaches to achieving legislative change.



## 3 Progress - Education and Health

One of GLEN's strategic priorities in the Building sustainable Change Programme is to transform how service providers design and deliver services for LGB people - particularly in the education and health sectors.

### 3.1 What GLEN set out to achieve

Figure 3.1 outlines the key planned outcomes in the short, medium and long term for education. This set out a highly ambitious programme for change that can broadly be categorised into two strategic areas - developing partnerships and alliances, and policy and services in education.

**Figure 3.1 Overview of planned outcomes in the BSC Programme for changing the education system**

| Strategic area  | Planned outcomes and BSC Reference   |
|---|--|
| <b>Partnership and alliances</b>  | <b>Short-term</b>  |
|   | Progress towards building consensus and effective alliances (S3.1)   |
|   | <b>Medium-term</b>   |
|   | Parents organisations more familiar with sexual orientation issues and positively influence schools policy (M3.4)              |
| <b>Policy and services</b>  | <b>Short-term</b>  |
|   | Intra-Departmental Group working effectively (S3.2)  |
|   | Anti-bullying guidelines produced (S3.3)   |
|   | Inspectorate to establish standards for safety and apply to inspections (S3.4)   |
|   | <b>Medium-term</b>   |
|   | 'Safe school' models of best practice available with training/resources (M3.1), with buy-in by stakeholders and take-up (M3.2) |
|   | DES to commit resources to implement intra-departmental group action plan (M3.3)   |
|   | HSLs to broaden information based and executive capacity (M3.5)  |
|   | Regional and national youth services targeting young LGB people (M3.6)   |
|   | <b>Long-term</b>   |
| Delivery of equality for LGB in schools - non-controversial (L3.1)              |  |
| DES national LGB education strategy (similar to traveller education) (L3.2)     |  |
| School planning support services will have implemented equality strategy (L3.3) |  |

| Strategic area | Planned outcomes and BSC Reference  |
|----------------|---|
|                | SPHE, RSE and CSPE to include specific provision for LGB issues (L3.4)<br>LGB realities visible across mainstream curricula (L3.5)<br>NCCA to have developed guidelines for inclusion of LGB issues across curricula (L3.6) |

## 3.2 What was achieved - Education

### Building partnerships and alliances

Prior to the BSC Programme, GLEN had no systematic alliances or partnerships in the education sector. The BSC Programme facilitated the recruitment of a Director of Education Policy which meant that it could focus on the education sector. A key priority was to develop relationships and networks with the Department of Education and Skills, school management bodies, Parents Council and all education partners as these partners are critical to progress in the education sector and for ensuring that policy change actually impacts on individual schools. GLEN has succeeded in building key strategic alliances with all of these partners through a slow deliberate process of structured engagement mainly in the post-primary sector. GLEN's reason for concentrating on the post-primary sector is that second level is the time of greatest need and vulnerability for young LGB people as they begin to realise their sexual orientation. This focus was supported by the results of the *Supporting LGBT Lives* research in 2009 which found that a majority of LGBT respondents had very negative experiences at second level. The research also found that the most common age that people become aware of LGB sexual orientation is 12 and that the most common age for people to 'come out' is 17.

The relationships that GLEN has developed with education partners are the foundation for creating conditions of change in the education sector. They have been central to GLEN's achievements so far and should facilitate further progress. However, they also highlight a key challenge for GLEN particularly in interacting with government partners. GLEN's engagement is relationship based, determined by the quality of relationships with key individuals. It has developed good linkages with 'change champions' in the education sector. While GLEN does not have an alternative at present, this form of engagement potentially creates a constraint on GLEN's future impact in such an important sector. It has no framework for shaping the design and delivery of educational services and depends on its relationships to get leverage within the Department. This also means that its work is less visible outside of key deliverables identified in figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2 Overview of key milestones in relation to Education and Health

| PRE - 05   | 2005 | 2006  | 2007 | 2008  | 2009  | 2010  |
|--|------|---|------|---|---|---|
| <p>2003 GLEN Mental Health Report</p>  |      | <p>2006 Vision for Change</p>   |      | <p>Funding secured from CFI for national helpline linking 8 existing 9 LGBT lines</p> <p>ICGP guide on LGB issues published</p> <p>Psychological Society of Ireland Equality and Inclusive Practice policy guidelines</p> | <p>Supporting LGBT Lives</p> <p>LGBT Health published by HSE</p> <p>Irish Hospice Movement – Coping with death of your same sex partner</p> <p>IASW statement against reparative therapy</p>                            | <p>President launches LGBT Mental Health booklet</p> <p>College of Psychiatry of Ireland guidelines</p> <p>Irish Institute of Mental Health Nursing LGB Guidelines</p> <p>Samaritans LGBT Guide published</p> |
| <p>2000 GLEN education report published</p> <p>2004 Equality in Schools (Equality Authority)</p> |      | <p>DES antibullying template to schools-includes homophobic bullying</p> <p>Pobail – resource guide for 2<sup>nd</sup> level on sexual orientation</p> <p>B2/Equality Authority poster campaign</p> |      | <p>Valuing Visibility – research funded by DES with GLEN and Maynooth. Approved by all the education partners</p>   | <p>DES/GLEN - Guidance for Principals – endorsed by education partners</p> <p>Teachers Unions relaunch resource on supporting LGB students</p> <p>NAPD/GLEN/B2/EA pilot wholeschool training on homophobic bullying</p> | <p>NCGE/GLEN Guidelines for Guidance Counsellors in supporting LGBT students</p>  |

## Policy and practice

One of GLEN's key achievements under the BSC Programme was agreement on the Guidance for Principals and School Leaders - Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Students in Post-Primary Schools. The Guidance was designed as a resource for principals. It was published jointly by the Department of Education and Science, and by GLEN with the endorsement of seven key bodies:

- Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
- Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland
- Irish Vocational Education Association
- Joint Managerial Body for Secondary Schools
- National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals
- National Parents Council Post Primary
- Teachers Union of Ireland.

All of the stakeholders consulted who were familiar with the Guidance regard them as a critical milestone in equality for LGB students and a very positive starting point for developing policy and practice at school level. Their publication and endorsement was an achievement which many stakeholders felt might not have been possible even in the recent past. All also emphasised the importance of having them endorsed by key education partners and the significant achievement in securing this endorsement. This endorsement by key education partners has given credibility and authority to the Guidance. Nominally at least schools have to honour the Guidance. It has also generated momentum and recognition of LGB issues in school settings and begun to create some of the conditions needed for equality for LGB students.

A significant factor contributing to the publication and endorsement of the Guidance was the existence of a compelling, evidenced-base through *Supporting LGBT Lives* and GLEN's *Valuing Visibility Study* which documented the experiences of young people in schools. The 2006 study by Dr. James Norman of DCU was also important as it showed that 90% of school policies did not include homophobic bullying and 79% of teachers were aware of homophobic bullying. Our understanding is that GLEN and the education partners have received positive feedback to the Guidance and virtually no negative feedback. This was interpreted as indicating that issues around sexual orientation in schools were becoming 'normalised' with an acceptance that these equality issues need to be addressed.

To support implementation of the Guidance, the NAPD, Equality Authority, BelongTo and GLEN have developed a joint training programme and development support. This has been delivered in 10 schools so far (out of a total of c.750). As a strategy and policy body, GLEN does not have the resources to directly provide this support.

### **Challenges and priorities**

The Guidance is regarded as a highly significant step in progressing equality for LGB students in the education sector. However, there are still significant challenges in achieving the long-term planned objectives of the BSC programme, and ensuring that the Guidance genuinely informs practice and policy within schools.

- The critical challenge is ensuring that the guidance is implemented at school level by informing policy and practice. This requires local leadership plus practical support and guidance for principals and teachers. GLEN does not have the resources either to support schools in delivering the Guidance or to monitor implementation. The joint training programme referred to above is an important but insufficient development. There is no basis or evidence for determining whether they are being implemented at school level. GLEN does not have the resources to monitor and follow-through on the Guidance, particularly given the size of the education sector.
- A further challenge is having a framework for interacting with the Department, education bodies and schools on a more structured basis on equality. An Intra-Departmental Group offers a potential forum for developing the substantive infrastructure. The Schools Inspectorate is a critical player in ensuring that Department policy is applied at school level. Its Whole School Evaluations process is a potential opportunity to consider equality issues at school level. In addition the curricula of RSE, SPHE are potential avenues for raising awareness and changing behaviour on

sexual discrimination. However, there are significant variations in practice across the country in how these programmes are delivered. The agenda is extensive for GLEN and finding 'hooks' into the Department to influence this wider agenda is a key challenge.

- Finally there is scope for expanding its engagement with other equality bodies in particular the Equality Authority. Education is a key strategic sector in the Equality Authority's strategic plan. GLEN engages with the Authority as part of a consortium piloting whole school training to combat homophobic bullying. GLEN was also on an Equality Authority Advisory Group to research good practice in addressing homophobic bullying. The Chair of GLEN is also a member of the Equality Authority's Board. There is scope to widen the engagement with the Authority on the education sector - a critical sector for both organisations. There are potential synergies and scope to have a more targeted, joint approach to the sector.

Given the enormity of the challenges in the education sector, GLEN has to figure how it can build on the achievement of the Guidance.

### 3.3 What was achieved - Health

The BSC Programme did not specifically include objectives in relation to health. GLEN has focused on mental health issues predominantly because of the acknowledged risks faced by LGB people in relation to their mental health. It should be noted that the HSE also funds Gay HIV strategies but this work was beyond the remit of this evaluation. GLEN's core priorities in health have been:

- **To develop access to decision-making structures on health.** GLEN has developed critical networks with the HSE in particular through the National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP), and the Health Promotion Unit. The Director of Mental Health Policy post is funded through NOSP and the Office, with the Health Promotions Unit, is a critical forum for channelling GLEN's interaction on mental health. All of NOSP's actions are now LGBT-proofed indicating the success of LGBT organisations in shaping the mental health agenda of NOSP. The HSE also recently set up an LGBT Health Advisory Group to ensure that the health issues of LGBT people are reflected in service design.
- **Working with professional bodies to bring about sustainable change in policy and practice among professionals.** A key priority for GLEN has been to influence the curriculum and practice of professional bodies in the area of mental health. It has engaged with most of the key bodies including the Psychological Society of Ireland, the College of Psychiatry of Ireland and the Irish Association of Social Workers. The purpose of this engagement has been to influence professional practice on the ground by ensuring that LGB perspectives are included in the curriculum, in Continuing Professional Development and through guidelines on appropriate practice. Figure 3.2 outlines key milestones and deliverables by professional bodies.
- **Building research on mental health issues and LGBT people.** *Reach Out - The Irish National Strategy for Action on Suicide Prevention 2005 - 2014* included a specific action (action 15) to identify the risk of suicide faced by marginalised groups. This led to a research project funded by NOSP which also involved both GLEN and BelongTo. The final report, *Supporting LGBT Lives*, is a seminal report on mental health issues for LGBT people and has been extensively used to inform

emerging policy and practice not just in the health sector but also in education particularly in shaping the Guidance for Principals and School Leaders. The report essentially is a baseline report which will provide a benchmark for measuring future progress. Throughout the evaluation, the *Supporting LGBT Lives* research was routinely referred to during consultation with stakeholders highlighting its importance in shaping policy and practice. In addition to the value of the final report, the research process allowed GLEN to build relationships in the area of mental health, particularly with NOSP. The resultant networks have provided a key platform for increasing GLEN's potential influence in mental health.

- **Working with other organisations in the community and voluntary sector to improve delivery of mental health services.** GLEN has also developed relationships with a wide range of organisations such as the Irish Hospice Foundation, and the Samaritans.

GLEN is working with a range of LGBT organisations to develop a national helpline to link together the existing 9 local helplines which is due to be launched by end 2010. This project is funded by the Community Foundation Ireland (CFI). CFI's ambition for the national helpline is that it becomes a recognised port of call for LGBT people in the way that the Samaritans has become for people who need help.

## **Challenges and Priorities**

The key priorities that emerged during the consultation were:

- Design and delivery of mental health services to increase their *reach* to LGBT people. A key question for both statutory and non-statutory bodies is how to improve access to services for LGB people. This is a wider question of access to mental health services for all people in need.
- Developing professional practice so that mental health professionals are tuned in to the specific needs of LGB people. This means developing engagement and support with professional bodies and also considering ways in which training can be provided by the HSE itself. A key constraint is the lack of funding available for any training in the HSE that is not a statutory obligation.

The scale of the challenge in addressing mental health issues of LGB people is immense, particularly for a small NGO organisation whose focus is on policy and strategy rather than service delivery. This is compounded by a number of structural uncertainties relating to how services are delivered, notably the current reconfiguration programme which involves extensive reconfiguration of local health and social services including mental health services. Mental health services are being configured based on the *Vision for Change* programme. Coupled with the uncertainties around future services because of the more constrained public sector environment, it is challenging for an organisation like GLEN to zone in on where it is likely to have most impact.

## 3.4 GLEN's role and impact

Figure 3.2 charts key milestones and deliverables in relation to health and education. The critical question is what was GLEN's contribution - was its role critical or would this progress have happened anyway? We explicitly probed this question with people consulted and the following were the key findings:

- In both the health and education sectors, GLEN has worked assiduously to build its relationships and engagement with education and health partners. This engagement is valued by these partners and recognised as the foundation for future progress. It is a time-consuming, painstaking, structured process that combines creating opportunities for engagement and capitalising on existing opportunities. This engagement process has been facilitated by the professional background and credentials of the Directors for Education and Mental Health Policy who respectively have a teaching and occupational therapy background. Their expertise and technical competence to help develop approaches in both sectors has given them a leverage that would have been more difficult to build for people without this background. However, developing partnerships is also a slow and not particularly visible process for people who are not directly involved. Its impact therefore may not be fully appreciated beyond the immediate circle of partners involved.
- In the education sector, GLEN has provided an important leadership role in developing and securing endorsement for the *Guidance for Principals and School Leaders*. This Guidance is acknowledged by partners as a defining milestone in bringing an LGBT agenda to the education sector. One stakeholder indicated that GLEN has made a *'major contribution towards improving the lot of a minority....progress has been amazing...a major step forward.'* However, GLEN's leadership role would not have succeeded without the leadership demonstrated by other partners also - in particular the organisations that endorsed the Guidance. Key partners were receptive to the Guidance for a variety of reasons including: the findings from the body of research that has emerged in recent years particularly *Supporting LGBT Lives*, the personal commitment of key people within the education partners. However, education partners also recognise that progress is slow and that the key challenge is to ensure that Guidance is implemented on the ground.
- In the health sector, GLEN has also contributed to developing insights on the risks faced by LGBT people to influence policy and practice in mental health. Its focus has been on the mental health issues faced by LGBT people that arise from the experience of stigmatisation, discrimination and harassment. It played a key role, along with other partners such as NOSP and BelongTo, in developing the *Supporting LGBT Lives* research. This has provided a strong evidence-base for convincing service providers and mental health professionals of the need to LGBT-proof policy and practice. In addition to working with the HSE, it has set out to influence the programmes of professional bodies working in mental health. GLEN has become a 'trusted partner' for key players in the HSE including the NOSP. All policies of the NOSP are now LGBT proofed and it is developing a strong evidence base for future policy initiatives. The *Supporting LGBT Lives* research provides an agenda for future action. The professional bodies that we consulted felt that GLEN brought a broader agenda to their work, prompting them to think about how their own programmes were geared to developing practitioners. A key challenge for GLEN is that all of the

professional bodies have multiple priorities such as developing practice in relation to early intervention, interventions to address depression which are wider than an LGBT agenda.

However, the challenges in both the education and health sectors are immense and GLEN is itself acutely aware of the significant programme of work in both sectors. It faces significant challenges in genuinely maximising its impact in two critical sectors.



## 4 Progress - Sustainable Communities and Workplace

Developing the capability of LGBT organisations is critical to achieving equality for LGBT people. Issues relating to the workplace and employment have been identified by LGBT people as one of their 'burning issues'. In this chapter we examine what GLEN has achieved in relation to building capacity in the LGBT organisations and in relation to workplace equality.

### 4.1 What GLEN set out to achieve

GLEN recognises that developing strong and vibrant LGBT organisations is critical to improving services for LGBT people across the country. Figure 4.1 outlines key priorities identified in the BSC Programme which can broadly be categorised as capacity building and access to services.

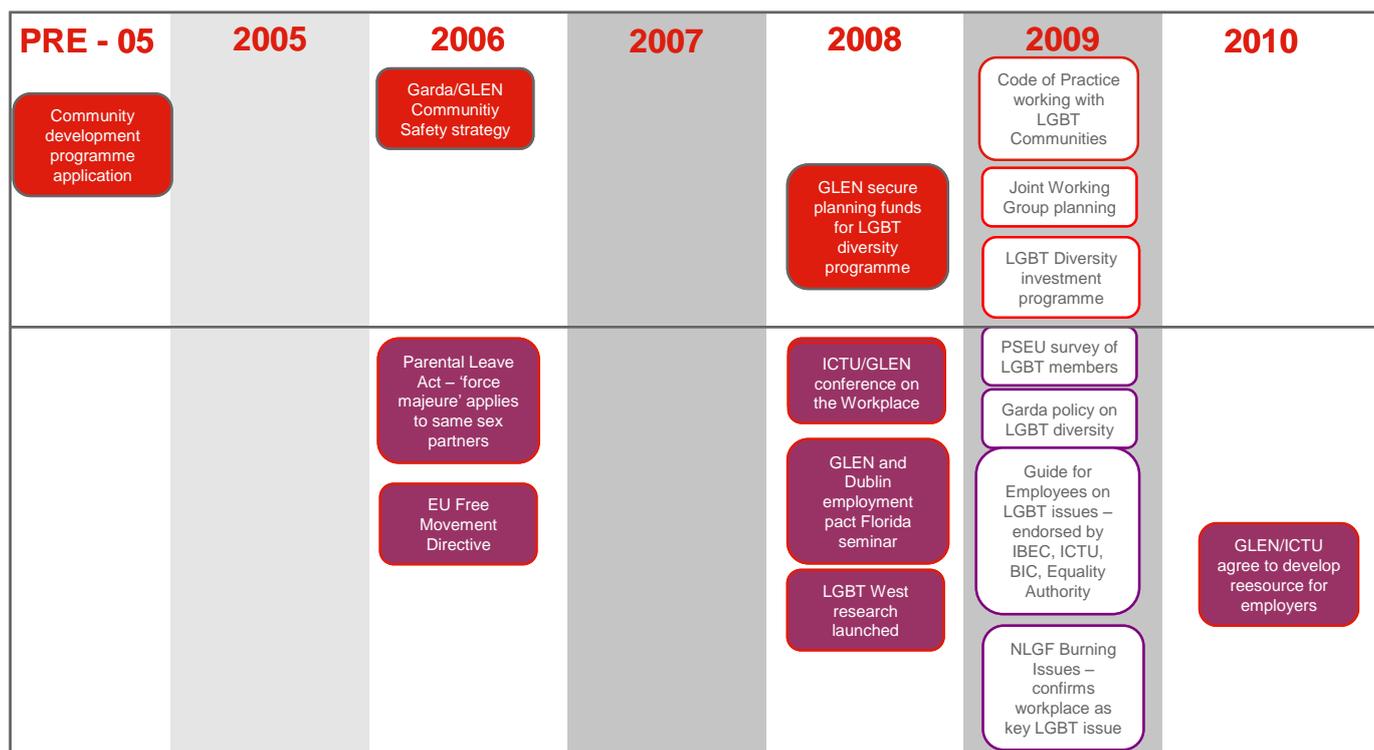
**Figure 4.1 Overview of the BSC Programme planned outcomes for building capacity**

| Strategic area  | Planned outcomes and BSC Reference   |
|---|--|
| Capacity building and media   | <b>Short-term</b>  |
|   | Measures to provide networking opportunities for LGB groups (S4.1)                   |
|   | New streams of income to LGB NGOs (S4.2) and increased skills (S4.3)                 |
|   | <b>Medium-term</b>   |
|   | LGB NGOs working in partnership with NI and involved in EU activities (M4.4)         |
|   | Increased mutual respect - understanding differences and commonalities (M4.5)        |
|   | <b>Long-term</b>   |
|   | Increase in number of LGB people known to the public through media stream (L4.1)     |
|   | Strategic alliance between LGB NGOs and mainstream organisations (L4.2)              |
|   | Increase in number of LGB organisations and businesses focusing on LGB trade (L4.3)  |
| Acceptance of people being visibly out (L4.4)   |  |
| LGB people better facilitated by employers and mainstream organisations to form networks and communities (L4.5) |  |
| LGB becomes self-sustaining with planned, reliable, adequate mainstream funding (L4.6)                          |  |
| Access to services by LGB   | <b>Medium-term</b>   |
|   | Services provided to LGB people by NGOs organised more effectively (M4.1) and funded |

| Strategic area | Planned outcomes and BSC Reference   |
|----------------|--|
| people         | through government social inclusion funds (M4.2)<br>Services for young people extended country-wide (M4.3) |

## 4.2 What has been achieved - Building LGBT capacity

Figure 4.2 Overview of milestones for community development and workplace initiatives



### Community Development

The importance of strong LGBT organisations is recognised as a key factor affecting future social change. As figure 4.2 indicates there has been evidence of progress such as:

- The establishment of the LGBT Joint Working Group to plan for a programme of investment by the Atlantic Philanthropies on building LGBT capacity. The Joint Working Group comprised GLEN and nine LGBT organisations from different geographies and with different remits. The resultant LGBT Diversity Programme is now funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies and sets out a blueprint for capacity development over the next 3 years. Discussion with stakeholders suggests that there are some mixed levels of confidence on the potential success of the programme.
- Increased number of organisations with LGBT networks and communities e.g. Gardai and Gay Doctors Ireland, individual businesses
- Community safety networks and liaison with the Gardai is well-established
- Code of practice for the Community Development Infrastructure on working with LGBT communities.

The LGBT Diversity programme now provides a blueprint for action to develop LGBT organisations. The process of agreeing the programme was in itself difficult to get off the ground - there was an initial concept paper followed by a detailed funding application to the Atlantic Philanthropies. There are still some frustrations within GLEN and by local organisations about the pace of change on community development and in particular access to services for LGB people across the country. The establishment of the role of Director of Community Development Policy has been a key driver in achieving progress to date although it was one of the last posts to be filled. Developing community capacity has been one of the more challenging areas for GLEN to advance for a number of reasons.

- Firstly GLEN does not have a clearly developed sense of what it wants to achieve strategically in the community development space. This is in marked contrast with its strategic focus in other areas such as legislative reform where it is singular in its focus. GLEN's focus is a more 'centrist' top-down approach which is appropriate for its policy and strategy remit. Developing a 'bottom-up' approach requires different capability and resource levels. While it is regarded as a superb resource by local organisations, it has not yet been able to expand its capability on the policy/legislation to developing local service advocates so that LGB people can access the services they need locally.
- There is a sense by GLEN itself that the social inclusion and Community Development Programme (CDP) has not really delivered for LGBT people. LGBT organisations have found it particularly difficult to align with the community development process. This difficulty of alignment is not surprising. The social inclusion and CDP process is very much area-based and from GLEN's perspective more narrowly 'poverty-focused' rather than social inclusion and equality focused. For GLEN, the equality issues for LGB people are much wider and so it has taken a population-based approach looking at the needs of LGB people as a whole. These are fundamentally different starting points (i.e. population-based and area-based approach) and finding how they can dovetail with each other is complicated. GLEN has not found it easy to interact successfully with area-based structures although there is some evidence that a growing number of CDPs, FRCs and Partnerships are producing outputs on LGBT issues.
- GLEN's initiatives to influence the social inclusion and community development agenda highlight a gap between policy and service delivery in the advocacy space. All of the LGBT organisations exist to improve services for people on the ground. GLEN exists to influence overall policy and strategy. Whose role is it to make the connection between strategy, service design and delivery on the ground? GLEN operates at a very strategic level while local organisations are at the front end of service delivery. There is a design piece missing that is a real barrier to engaging with community development structures and securing funding for initiatives. A finding from this review was that GLEN's national initiatives can have a knock-on effect in terms of generating local demand for services. For example, the recent Guidance for School Principals has generated local demand for services in local schools which is beyond the capacity of all but a small number of local organisations to deliver on.

## Workplace and employment

This was not specifically included in the BSC Programme but has since emerged as one of the single most important issues for LGBT people. The NLFG *Burning Issues* survey confirmed equal rights at work as the top ranking issue for respondents. A survey by the PSEU goes into more detail on the specific issue of equality in the workplace. This survey indicated that 3 out of 5 LGBT people are not 'out' to their immediate line manager/supervisor, almost 3 out of 4 indicated that their employers policy on LGBT diversity was not very well known, and that 2 out of every 5 had suffered some form of discrimination with a further 3 in 10 experiencing verbal abuse. Interestingly, 4 out of 5 respondents felt that their promotion, transfer or assignment to work had not been influenced by their sexuality. Nevertheless, both surveys highlight the central importance of workplace diversity. Some of the issues will be addressed as part of the Civil Partnership legislation such as pension entitlements. However, others are more wide-ranging.

In response to the evident need for protections in the workplace, GLEN has developed and published its guide to employers which was endorsed by IBEC, ICTU, BITC and the Equality Authority. The guidelines were informed by the approach taken by Stonewall in the UK but significantly adapted for the Irish market. GLEN is currently focusing on large employers which will in turn provide the platform to work with SMEs. Smaller companies are more likely both not to be compliant and not to promote equality.

GLEN has actively promoted a perspective that links economic prosperity and well-being to diversity. This is clearly shaping the diversity agenda positively towards equality and its benefits rather than a more minimalist approach to compliance with legal obligations. This perspective is based on the work of Richard Florida and is gaining traction with key decision-makers. It was referred to spontaneously by several stakeholders as evidence of GLEN's assertive and ambitious approach to diversity and employment and its success in helping to shape the diversity agenda.

### 4.3 GLEN's role and impact

The **community development** role covers a diverse range of activities in GLEN including capacity-building, community safety, workplace equality and employment. GLEN has found it more difficult to progress its agenda in the community development space.

GLEN has played an important role in stimulating and facilitating the LGBT Diversity programme funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies which sets the blueprint for building capacity in LGBT organisations. In addition, GLEN can clearly demonstrate progress on a number of other key areas particularly in relation to community safety.

However, community development and capacity building has been a more complicated area for GLEN to tackle. It does not naturally play to its core approach which is grounded in policy and strategy. Its strategic sense of what is required is therefore not as developed as it is in other areas and it therefore has been more tentative in its approach. It has found it difficult to find levers into the community development sector and this is linked to the absence of a clearly developed sense of what it wants to achieve. It has not as yet developed an appropriate balance between its top-down strategy/policy skill set and a bottom-up approach. While GLEN is not a service delivery organisation, there was a strong sense from some stakeholders that it needs to be more actively developing a bottom up approach to complement its top-down if it wants to mainstream the LGBT agenda. However, community development policy and programmes are being re-structured. GLEN still needs to consider what its policy and programme priorities are in relation to community development and what it means for the community development function.

Workplace equality is an emerging area. The Code of Practice for employers was a GLEN initiative which it developed through engaging with industry and social partners. Initially, it drew substantially on a similar code developed by Stonewall which had to be tailored for the Irish market. GLEN played a key role both in initiating the Code and in securing its adoption through close collaboration with the social partners and the corporate sector. This is now a significant emerging area for GLEN with critical challenges in ensuring that the code is implemented, particularly in the SME sector. On a wider level, GLEN has been successful in re-framing thinking about employment and the stimulating effect of diversity in attracting investment.

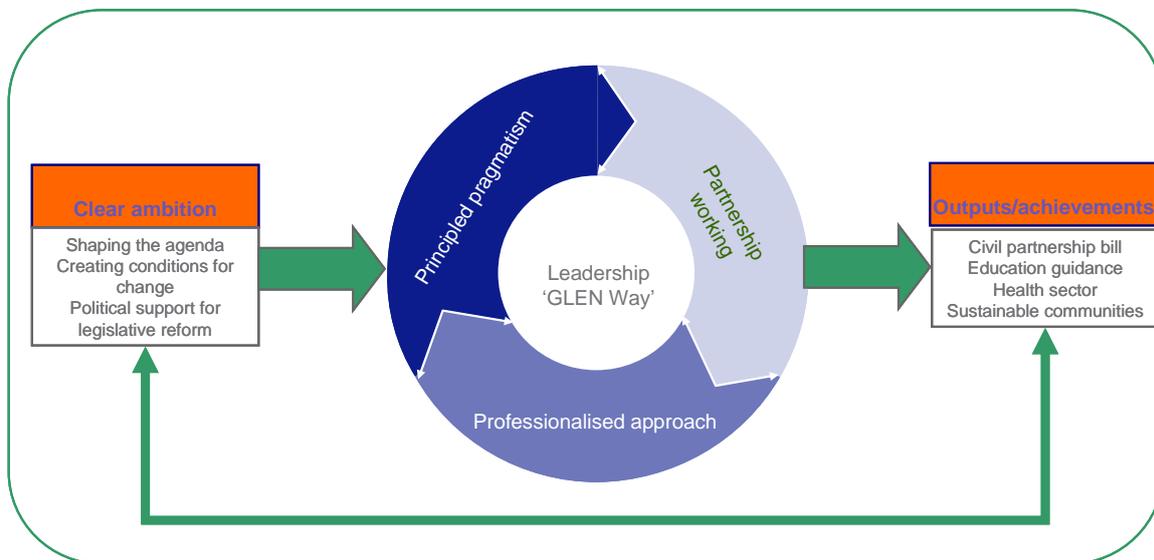
## 5 GLEN's model of working

One of the explicit requirements of the evaluation was to assess GLEN's approach to achieving the BSC Programme. What were the strengths and limitations of its approach? Through our programme of consultation we got feedback from stakeholders on how they saw GLEN's strengths and challenges

### 5.1 Strengths of GLEN's approach

A key finding from the evaluation is that GLEN has a distinct approach that in the view of many stakeholders consulted is highly effective and a potential model of how effective NGOs should operate. The BSC Programme outlined 7 core principles guiding its approach to achieving its strategic objectives. These were: High expectations; Principled pragmatism; Radical yet feasible ambitions; Commitment to effectiveness; Positive approach; Building coalitions; Preserving political/analytical credibility. It was clear from our discussion with stakeholders from government and social partners in particular that its approach reflected these principles. As illustrated in figure 5.1, we have distilled three core elements of its working model that were identified as strengths by stakeholders.

**Figure 5.1 Overview of GLEN's model of working**

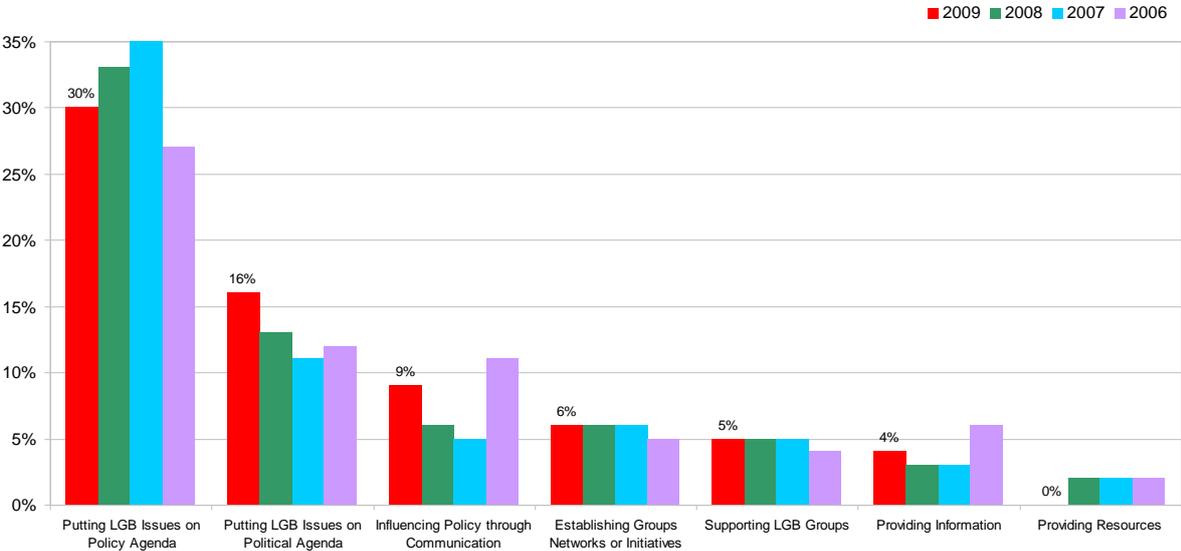


### 5.1.1 A pragmatic approach

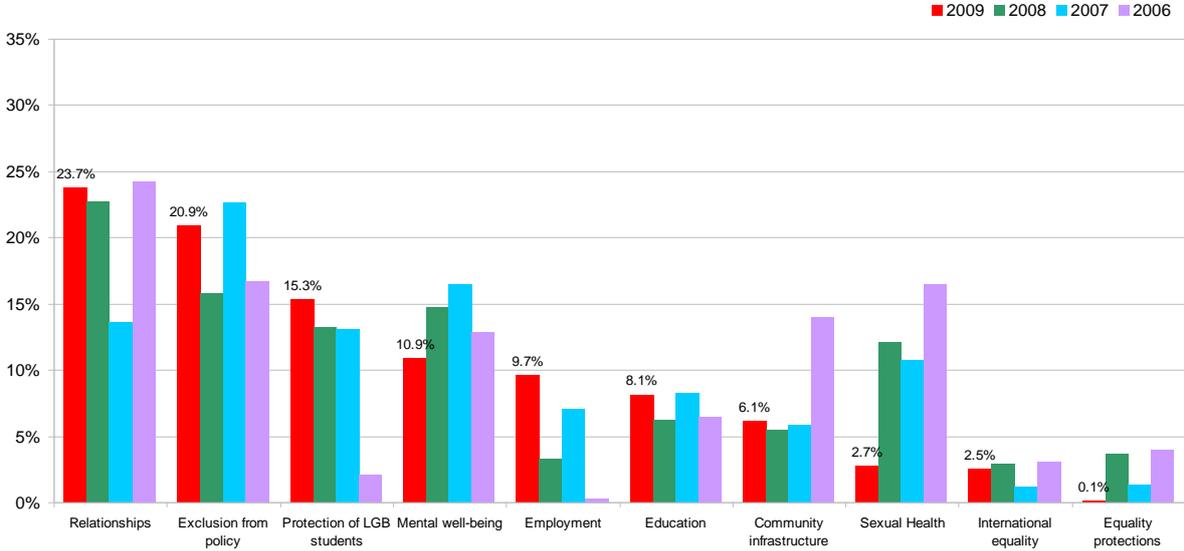
One of GLEN's defining features is that it combines a strong sense of strategic direction with a highly pragmatic approach to achieving it. This 'principled pragmatism' is borne from lessons learned through its experience over two decades as a policy and strategy organisation. The BSC Programme sets out a complex programme of change to bring about equality for LGBT people. Behind this veneer of programme complexity, GLEN have a very singular and clear sense of what they want to achieve, and what they need to do to achieve it. This is a highly potent and successful formula which can be elusive for many organisations. The critical priority for GLEN was securing legal recognition for same sex partners. This is not to say that its actions in other sectors were less important - but the legal framework was the overarching priority, the organising and driving force. GLEN had a view both on *what* it wanted to achieve and *how to progress it*. Its focus was on:

- *Shaping the agenda and building conditions for change.* This involved working with politicians, civil servants and other partners. This required an astute sense of how the machinery of government works, its pressure points, and in particular the nuances of the legislative process. GLEN knows how decision-making works - civil servants and politicians 'didn't feel ambushed' by GLEN and trusted them as interlocutors. This clearly had implications and consequences for GLEN. It meant that, at times, GLEN had to moderate its public statements on sensitive issues so as not to upset delicately balanced coalitions.
- *Recognising opportunities, constraints and choices.* It created *opportunities* to advance their agenda (for example inviting senior political leaders to launch reports etc which it used strategically) and availed of opportunities as they arise to advance their agenda. It recognised the constraints that decision-makers operate under and worked around these constraints. This was a deliberate, tactical approach designed to advance their objectives. GLEN does not play a 'zero sum' game - it builds and consolidates on achievements.

**Figure 5.2 GLEN's assessment of how it allocates its resources by it key activities**



**Figure 5.3 GLEN's assessment of how it allocates its resources across priority sectors**



Figures 5.2 and 5.3 are taken from GLEN's internal evaluation system (SPEAK) and show the balance of its time allocated to key types of activity and by priority sectors. Both figures underline the priority attached to its policy/strategic work and across key sectors. GLEN is highly strategic in its approach, conscious of the choices it faces, and the risks, implications and consequences arising from those choices. The over-riding focus was to do what was needed to achieve as much of their ambition as possible. It takes a deliberate and considered strategic approach on its strategic choices and implications.

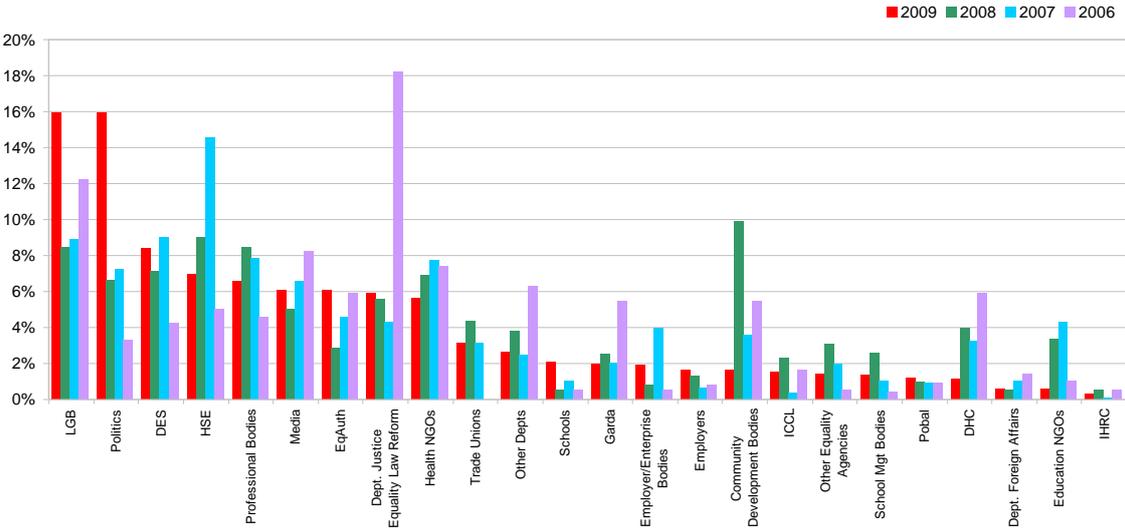
**5.1.2 Partnership working**

GLEN is acutely aware of its limitations as an NGO and the need to work successfully with key collaborators and partners. GLEN engages with a wide span of different 'constituencies' - government bodies, politicians of all parties, trade unions, business interests, other LGBT organisations, LGBT people. Its approach is essentially one of consensus-building. However, as a policy and strategy body it has actively nurtured relationships with decision-makers i.e. politicians, civil servants and other partners depending on the sector. GLEN describes its approach as:

- Consolidating support
- Winning over the doubtful
- Pacifying those opposed.

Figure 5.4 illustrates the proportion of time spent across key partners by GLEN. The key spikes of activity can be readily mapped to areas of progress e.g. 2006 with participation in the Colley group, 2009 and political activity relating to the Civil Partnership Bill, 2007 with Supporting LGBT Lives research, 2007 and 2008 with underlying preparation for the Guidance for Principals, and 2008 with the Code of Practice for working with LGBT communities.

**Figure 5.4 Overview of GLEN's interactions with key stakeholders**



Key stakeholders in the government and political sphere found it very easy to work and engage with GLEN - even when there may have been profound differences between them at times. GLEN's approach was fundamentally empathic and reasonable - to understand the constraints of its partners and how it could work to minimise the constraints. This in turn made GLEN 'easy to do business with'. GLEN was consistently regarded by stakeholders as a 'trusted resource' - an authoritative and reasonable 'voice' on LGBT issues. It has carefully and deliberately identified key decision-makers and potential 'champions' to act as internal advocates within public bodies and political parties. It has engaged with people at the most senior level of government - its strategic ambition is mirrored in its ambition to talk to whoever it takes to deliver their agenda. In relation to the legislative agenda, it is clear from our consultation that GLEN was the main 'voice' listened to by decision-makers. GLEN also interacts with other LGBT organisations that are more focused on service delivery.

**5.1.3 Professional resourcing**

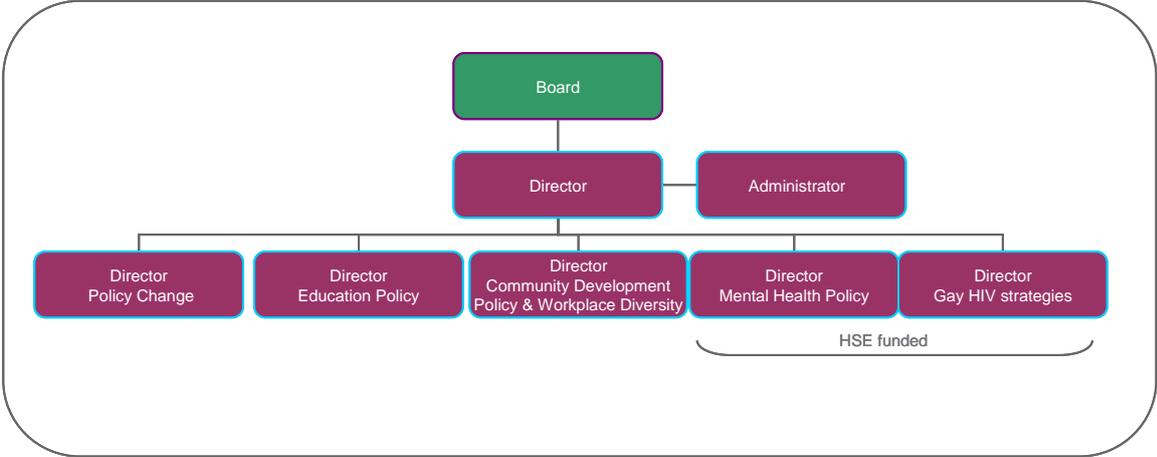
GLEN has become a 'trusted voice' of LGBT people in the policy and legislative arenas. The question is how did GLEN acquire this 'authority'? It isn't a 'representative' body for LGBT people so it doesn't have a democratic mandate which can confer authority. The main reason GLEN has become a 'trusted voice' is because it has built political capital and 'reference power' because of *how* they engage with partners.

A further factor that inspired trust and confidence in GLEN, particularly by stakeholders from the social partners, is GLEN's 'professionalism'. The BSC Programme enabled GLEN to move from a volunteerist organisation to put it on a professional footing with a fulltime staff. However, having a fulltime resource does not automatically guarantee effectiveness. The key features of its professional approach that consistently came through the evaluation were:

- *Evident leadership at Board and management level.* The direction provided by the Board and by staff of GLEN was consistently referred to as a critical factor. The Board works closely with staff, knowing when to 'step in' and when to 'step out'. They were able to build on their engagement with key government bodies to develop funding streams for their work (through the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, the HSE and the Atlantic Philanthropies).
- *Quality of its staff and intellectual resource.* GLEN recruited carefully to ensure that its Directors had the technical competence as well as 'culture' fit to deliver its ambition. Figure 5.5 outlines its organisational structure which maps the strategic priorities outlined in the BSC Programme. Feedback from organisations that interact with GLEN consistently underlined the importance of staff as an important intellectual resource, highly competent in their respective disciplines. Without this level of resourcing, GLEN would not have been able to achieve progress.
- *Well-researched, evidence-based approach.* GLEN has commissioned or been associated with research that helped to establish/build on their technical credentials to shape agenda. In relation to its education and health agendas, *Supporting LGBT Lives* has provided undisputed evidence of the issues faced by young LGBT people and how to address them. When the heads of the Civil Partnership Bill were published, GLEN also commissioned research on the Bill which enabled it to comment authoritatively on the proposed legislation. Critically, GLEN's staff are seen by key stakeholders with whom they interact as an important 'intellectual resource' and a source of technical expertise in their particular areas of responsibility.
- *A tangible and clearly articulated culture - the 'GLEN Way'.* Many organisations espouse cultures but fail to live up to them in how they live them. GLEN has a particular style of working with its partners which is clearly evident to its stakeholders. In many ways this culture and way of doing things (what they call the GLEN way) is a critical source of power for GLEN giving it credibility and authority.
- *Strong management disciplines* including financial and administration disciplines.
- *Strong focus on monitoring and reporting performance.* GLEN's SPEAK system monitors and reports on performance and this is used to track and report on performance. It is acutely conscious of the need to understand where it's going and how it needs to adapt as required and this is evident in how it self-evaluates its performance.

This combination of resources was central to GLEN's success.

**Figure 5.5 Overview of GLEN's organisational structure**



## 5.2 Challenges arising from its working model

GLEN's model of working is widely regarded by social partner stakeholders as effective and a template for other organisations for the reasons outlined above. However, it has also created a number of critical dilemmas for GLEN which it needs to consider afresh now that the civil partnership legislation is adopted.

- Engaging with multiple constituencies with different interests and perspectives can be challenging. GLEN made a deliberate choice to focus on decision-makers and politicians. In the context of the civil partnership negotiations, this has meant that at times:
  - GLEN has not communicated proactively with LGBT organisations and people on its preferred position and approach. While its focus on the centre may partially explain this, there is also a perception by LGBT organisations that GLEN has been reticent to engage and communicate. Figure 5.4 shows that LGB people are a key constituency for GLEN but its communication is not having the desired impact.
  - GLEN has understated and downplayed its own preferred position so as not to risk delicately balanced agendas. This was particularly true of the Civil Partnership legislation where it knew that it couldn't have a public and private stance that were not consistent in case it might alienate the 'political middle ground' i.e. it couldn't publicly continue advocating marriage only. GLEN was vocal in its case for marriage until publication of the Labour Bill when for pragmatic reasons it had to review its public and private stances.

The biggest consequence for GLEN has been confusion about its stance and preferred position among LGB people. In the case of the Civil Partnership Bill it was not clear to other LGB perspectives that GLEN's preference was for full marriage. This may now have become somewhat academic given that the legislation has passed all stages but it highlights an important issue for GLEN in the future.

- GLEN's model of working means that it risks being perceived by the LGB community as being 'coopted' by the establishment. How can it work as a *quasi insider* while not being perceived as 'coopted' by its core constituency? What does this mean for how it engages with other LGBT organisations?
- GLEN's model of working means that much of its work is quiet, behind the scenes work, creating the conditions for change. The question therefore is how it can have visibility for its work, particularly with LGB people? There are clear deliverables and outputs across each of GLEN's areas of focus but the investment in terms of time and intellectual resources to achieve these deliverables is easy to understate. This lack of 'visibility' can reinforce the perceived slow pace of change in some sectors.
- The nature of its role as a policy and strategy organisation, which by definition means interacting with senior people at government level, has contributed to a perception of GLEN as slightly arrogant, somewhat elitist, slightly paternalistic (in terms of knowing what's best for LGB people) and Dublin-centric. It is also viewed by some LGBT organisations as concerned more with gay issues than lesbian issues and also representing older people.
- GLEN's positioning in the LGB sector. It is seen as an important voice for LGB people by partners and a first, if not the sole, point of contact on LGB issues for some key partners. The question is how it manages its interaction with the LGBT sector while at the same time meeting constraints of key partners. Our sense is that there is an appetite for more engagement by the LGB community with GLEN.

GLEN is itself acutely aware of these dilemmas as a policy and strategy organisation. Its focus has remained firmly on the goal of legislative change and, while it recognises these dilemmas, it has not fully addressed them. With the adoption of the legislation the time is opportune. At the root of these dilemmas is how it engages with and communicates with LGB people and organisations.

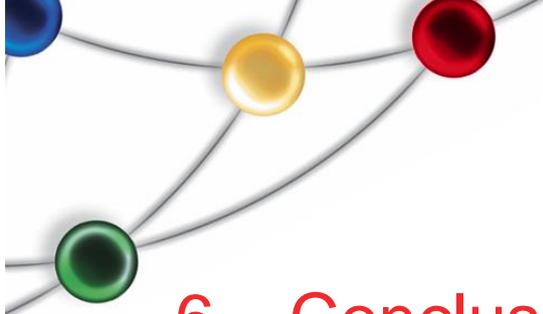
GLEN also faces two further challenges:

- Firstly to ensure that it has the resources to continue on a professional footing. A key finding was that the level of resourcing was central to GLEN's success. In theory, as the equality agenda for LGB people is achieved GLEN should no longer have a *raison d'etre*. In reality, most stakeholders acknowledge that the agenda remains substantive. This raises key future challenges for negotiating funding streams.
- Developing its outcome-based approach to measuring success so that it can demonstrate impact of its initiatives to advance equality for LGB people. This can be intricate as it essentially means assessing the impact on LGB peoples' lives. This has been incorporated in GLEN's new strategic plan and will require developing indicators to evidence progress.

## 5.3 Conclusion

GLEN has successfully combined a 'missionary zeal' to achieve policy and legislative change for LGB people with an astute professionalism in how it pursues its agenda. The combination of the two has positioned GLEN as a trusted voice on LGB issues among legislators and decision-makers. This review concludes that this is essentially down to three key elements of its approach - principled pragmatism, collaborative partnerships, and its professional approach. GLEN is a small organisation with an ambitious agenda and it routinely has to make strategic choices on how best to pursue this agenda.

However, this has also created some challenges for GLEN in terms of its positioning among LGB people particularly in relation to legal recognition. Its agenda and the full span of its agenda is not clear to other LGBT organisations and/or would be contested by some. It can also come across as somewhat 'elitist' and Dublin-centric given its concentration on decision-makers. This confusion and uncertainty about GLEN's position and positioning is a direct consequence of the strategic choices GLEN has taken. Based on this feedback from LGB stakeholders it now needs to consider whether and how it should more actively build linkages with the LGB community(ies).



## 6 Conclusions and future themes

The BSC Programme set out an ambitious programme of change to achieve equality for LGB people in relation to legal recognition and policy, education, and community development. It has also developed a capacity and priorities in relation to workplace and employment, and mental health issues in response to identified priorities.

This evaluation essentially addressed three questions put by GLEN:

- What was its contribution to achieving the aims of the BSC Programme? This was covered in chapters 2, 3 and 4.
- How effective was its approach - in particular its strengths and limitations in advancing the BSC Programme aims? This was covered in chapter 5.
- What are the key lessons and strategic pointers to guide its future work?

In the following sections we summarise our findings on each of these questions. It draws substantially on our discussion with key stakeholders.

### 6.1 GLEN's contribution to achieving the BSC Programme

This evaluation identified significant areas of progress under the BSC Programme. Given the scale of change involved it was not possible for GLEN to achieve the aims of the BSC Programme on its own. A key question we probed with stakeholders was GLEN's contribution to achieving progress. We identified the following key areas of progress:

- **Significant advance in the legal framework through the Civil Partnership Bill.** This was GLEN's dominant focus. While GLEN's ambition was for marriage, it worked to secure a model of civil partnership that most closely approximated to marriage. This was based on its considered assessment that, had it held out for full marriage, there was a very real likelihood that any legislative change would have been off the agenda. GLEN's priority was to secure the best possible deal given its understanding of constraints. Our sense from the consultation was that this was a reasonable calculation on GLEN's part. Our clear understanding is that, had GLEN persisted with its preferred option, civil partnership was at risk of going off the political agenda completely. GLEN understood this risk and made a calculated decision to pursue civil partnership and the legislative protections it brought. However, this is clearly a contested position with some LGB organisations taking a more purist, principled approach advocating full marriage compared to GLEN's more pragmatic approach. It was very clear from our consultation (and from public remarks by the Minister for Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs at the launch of the LGBT diversity Programme in July 2010) that GLEN played a critical role in shaping and advancing the legislation, knowing when to work the key 'pressure points'. The Minister also acknowledged that

there was 'never an inevitability' about the introduction of civil partnership legislation - particularly in the context of other pressures on government through the changed economic environment.

- **Identifiable progress in education particularly with the agreement on *Guidance for Principals and School Leaders*.** GLEN's approach has been to build its relationship with key education partners and to support the development of a significant body of research. The agreement on the Guidance is seen by education partners as a significant milestone and starting point in securing equality for LGB people in education. However, key partners also recognise that progress is slow and that the key challenge is to ensure that Guidance is implemented on the ground.
- **Developing insights on the risks faced by LGB to influence policy and practice in mental health.** GLEN has focused on the mental health issues faced by LGB people. It played a key role, along with other partners such as *BelongTo*, in developing the *Supporting LGBT Lives* research. This has provided a strong evidence-based for convincing service providers and mental health professionals of the need to LGBT-proof policy and practice.
- **GLEN has played an important role in stimulating and facilitating the LGBT Diversity programme** funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies which sets the blueprint for building capacity in LGBT organisations. In addition, GLEN can clearly demonstrate progress on a number of other key areas particularly in relation to community safety. However, community development and capacity building has been a complicated area for GLEN to tackle compared to other areas of focus. Its strategic sense of what is required is not as developed as it is in other areas as it does not play to its core approach on strategy and policy. GLEN has therefore found it more difficult to find levers into the community development sector - it does not intuitively know the influence points in the same way as it does at national level.
- **GLEN developed a Code of Practice for employers on LGBT issues.** Issues relating to the workplace have been identified as a key issue for LGB people and feature in GLEN's new strategic priorities. It has worked closely with the social partners to achieve this. GLEN has also advocated a broader economic case for equality and diversity e.g. the publication of a paper on the role of diversity in economic competitiveness.

GLEN has helped to build a growing evidence base through research as well as building partnerships to advance its aims in priority sectors. These are helping to create the conditions for change. However, the scale of the challenge in changing policy and practice is immense across all areas of its activity particularly in the education and health sectors.

## 6.2 Strengths of its approach

Many of the stakeholders consulted, particularly social partners, regard GLEN as a model of how effective NGOs should work, particularly in how they interface with government. The single most important factor contributing to GLEN's success is its model of working, referred to by GLEN as the 'GLEN way'. This is a clearly conceived, carefully articulated approach which is shared by all Board members and staff and which has given it a credibility and authority to influence above its weight. One of the striking findings of this evaluation was the consistency of the message *internally* on the approach and also how evident it was to *external* partners. In chapter 5 we identified 3 central pillars of its model of working:

1. **Principled pragmatism** is the cornerstone of GLEN's approach. They have developed a finely attuned sense of *what* they want to achieve, and *how* to achieve it. Their paradigm of change is to work actively *with* government officials, politicians and partners and have therefore a highly developed sense of how the political system works and where the pressure points for influence are (both positive and negative). Their starting point is that they have to convince people of the need for change rather than assuming that this is evident to people. In trying to develop this influence, GLEN has recognised that they also have to be influencable and face choices themselves. This has meant that they have had to opt for less than their stated ambition, notably in relation to civil partnership rather than marriage. This demonstrated a careful calculation on their part of what they felt was achievable - in essence what was required to drive through the legislation. It is recognised by stakeholders as singular in its focus and holding its nerve when the ground was shifting.
2. **Developing solid relationships with partners.** GLEN has assiduously developed an extensive network of relationships at government and political level across its priority sectors. It has acquired political capital over the years through the manner it has chosen to engage with politicians and officials. It is regarded as easy to do business with, and a 'trusted' partner in the sense that it understands the constraints and choices facing government officials and politicians. GLEN's strategy has been to help partners work around these constraints rather than either ignoring them or seeing their resolution as somebody else's responsibility. Its strategy has been to consolidate its support, win over the middle ground, and neutralise the opposition - essentially a consensus-building approach. GLEN understands the 'rules of the game' and knows that it can't have a *public* and *private* face that are odds with each other. This would undermine its careful approach to alliance building but it also poses dilemmas for GLEN.
3. **Professional approach.** One of the GLEN's hallmarks is that it combines 'missionary' zeal with a highly professionalised approach. This can be a difficult combination for a policy and advocacy organisation to achieve as the ambition can often be the 'standout' driver to the exclusion of the more mundane drivers that make a really good organisation work, in whatever sector. We have identified the key elements of their professional approach in terms of the quality and credentials of their staff, the leadership provided by their Board, their finance and administration disciplines, their research and analysis capacity. They also have a capability for self-reflection and awareness. The combined effect of these elements have given GLEN a credibility and authority in its interactions with its partners.

## 6.3 Key Lessons and strategic pointers

### Key Lessons

GLEN's model of working is widely regarded by stakeholders as effective and a template for other organisations for the reasons outlined above. However, it has also created a number of critical dilemmas for GLEN which it needs to consider afresh now that the civil partnership legislation has passed through the Oireachtas.

- GLEN's model of working means that it risks being perceived by the LGB community as being 'coopted' by the establishment. How can it work as a *quasi insider* while not being perceived as 'coopted' by its core constituency? What does this mean for how it engages with other LGBT organisations.
- Its model of working means that much of its work is quiet, behind the scenes, creating the conditions for change. The question therefore is how it can have visibility for its work, particularly with LGB people? There are clear deliverables and outputs across each of GLEN's areas of focus but the investment in terms of time and intellectual resources to achieve these deliverables is easy to understate. This lack of 'visibility' can reinforce the perceived slow pace of change in some sectors.
- The nature of its role as a policy and strategy organisation, which by definition means interacting with senior people at government level, has meant that its focus has mainly been 'top-down'. This has contributed to a perception of GLEN as slightly arrogant, somewhat elitist, slightly paternalistic (in terms of knowing what's best for LGB people), and Dublin-centric. There was a strong sense that this 'top down' perspective needs to be complemented by a more aggressive 'bottom up' focus to ensure that mainstream services are designed and delivered to meet needs of LGB people.
- GLEN's positioning in the LGB sector is a matter for it to consider. It is seen as an important voice for the LGB by partners and a first, if not the sole, point of contact on LGB issues for some key partners. The question is how it manages its interaction with the LGB sector while at the same time meeting constraints of key partners. Our sense is that there is an appetite for more engagement by the LGB community with GLEN.

GLEN is itself acutely aware of these dilemmas. Its focus has remained firmly on the goal of legislative change and, while it recognises these dilemmas, it has not fully addressed them given its other priorities. With the adoption of the legislation the time is opportune. At the root of these dilemmas is how it engages with and communicates with LGB people and organisations. GLEN now needs to think about how it can address these issues with the same rigour that it has applied to achieving progress in legislative change.

### Strategic pointers for the Future

The enactment and implementation of the Civil Partnership Bill is expected to be 'game-changing' in terms of building momentum for future changes to improve equality for LGB people. It sets a very solid platform for advancing the equality agenda to a new level.

GLEN has just completed a strategy planning process to enable it finish the agenda set out in the BSC Programme. *Completing the Task- Strategic Plan 2011-2015* sets out GLEN's key priorities to achieve enduring change through changing the rules, changing the culture, and changing the lived experience of LGB people. This review highlighted the following issues which need to be considered in implementing the recent strategy.

- **Improving the reach of LGB people to mainstream services particularly in the education, health and other social inclusion areas.** GLEN has clearly positioned itself as a policy and strategy organisation while other LGBT organisations are evidently in the service delivery space also. However, there is a gap particularly in service delivery in the education and health sectors.
  - Bridging the gap between policy, service planning, and service delivery. There are clear issues for LGB people in accessing mainstream services to address their needs. This requires LGBT proofing of policies and services of all critical mainstream services and ensuring that this is practically reflected in services on the ground.
  - Raising awareness of key practitioners in critical services such as education, mental health and wider social inclusion sectors. This requires ongoing training and development to ensure that they are tuned in to the risk factors for LGB people.
  - Developing follow-through initiatives to ensure that the various codes of practice and guidance it has developed are being implemented on the ground.
- **Developing a more strategic sense of its community development agenda and how it interacts with social inclusion infrastructure.** The social inclusion infrastructure is undergoing fundamental re-structuring at present with the integration of the social inclusion agencies and community development infrastructure in the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs. In addition, community development structures at local level are being rationalised and streamlined. The timing is opportune for GLEN to consider how it can develop better working models that incorporate both a 'top-down' and bottom-up approach.
- **Developing its engagement with the LGB 'community' to strengthen its connections.** This has been identified as a key weakness in how GLEN works. With the passage of the new Civil Partnership Bill through the Oireachtas there is an opportunity for GLEN to connect with other organisations to enhance protections and rights of LGB people.
- **Developing GLEN's international connections and role.** GLEN has the potential to learn from and contribute to shaping international experience on LGB issues. There are two obvious fora for an initial engagement:
  - firstly to build its alliances with international advocacy and policy organisations such as ARC and ILGA. Irish advocacy organisations like GLEN can draw on the wider political capital that Ireland enjoys to lobby for LGB people in jurisdictions where their rights are being threatened and undermined.

- It could also more proactively draw on its connections with the Atlantic Philanthropies to learn from other NGOs and to share their experience with their model of working. This wider network of NGOs funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies is a potentially rich, as yet untapped, 'connector' and resource that could be mutually beneficial for GLEN and other NGOs in Ireland and internationally.
- **Developing its connections with the wider equality umbrella of organisations.** GLEN has a lot to contribute to and learn from other equality organisations in Ireland and internationally. In other jurisdictions, equality organisations have come together in collective fora to jointly lobby for social change. This recognises the horizontal, cross-cutting nature of equality advocacy and the potential synergies to minimise impact. However, we are also mindful that any initiatives need to be carefully timed given the wider debate on the equality infrastructure in Ireland. Initiatives to advance equality issues need to be carefully unpacked from the wider, more contested, issues relating to the equality infrastructure.
- **Completing the strategic agenda:** In relation to each of GLEN's priority areas, the review identified a number of areas:
  - Advancing legislative reform particularly in relation to children. The absence of protections for children is acknowledged as a critical weakness in the Civil Partnership legislation and offers potential to build bridges with other LGBT organisations. A further issue that consistently emerged was section 37 of the Employment Equality Act which has been a particular concern in the education sector although it is as yet untested.
  - The scale of the challenge in changing policy and practice in the education, health sectors is immense. GLEN has limited resources and therefore needs to be crystal clear on how it can have most impact where it counts - what is actually happening on the ground.
  - Refining its approach to community development so that it can balance its population-based approach with the 'area-based' approach that has defined community development.
  - Strengthening its focus on the workplace which is a significant concern for LGB people. There are particular concerns around workforce equality in the SME and small business sector rather than major corporates some of whom have are very progressive on equality policies.

Achieving these strategic priorities is an ambitious agenda for GLEN. It will need to draw on its experiences of the past five years to articulate and communicate key lessons and use these to expand its approach. It will also need to look at how it is resourced to deliver its strategic agenda including the role of the Board and executive. GLEN has put down solid 'roots' as a policy/strategy organisation - these can provide the springboard for the next phase of its development.



## Appendix A: Consultation programme

The evaluation included an extensive consultation process during which a large number of organisations were contacted. The table below includes the consultations that actually took place.

|   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Board members (7) and staff of GLEN (1:1 discussions)   | The Atlantic Philanthropies      |
| Department of Justice and Law Reform (officials and former Minister, Michael McDowell)                  | BelongTo                         |
| Department of Foreign Affairs   | IBEC                             |
| Chair of the Colley Group   | ICTU                             |
| HSE (National Office for Suicide Prevention, Health Promotion Unit, and social inclusion)               | Pobal                            |
| Department of Education and Skills  | Psychological Society of Ireland |
| Joint Managerial Body for Secondary Schools   | College of Psychiatry Ireland    |
| National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals  | LGBT Noise                       |
| IVEA  | Dundalk Outcomers                |
| National Parents Council  | Marriage Equality                |
| Community Foundation of Ireland and Business in the Community   | LINC                             |
| PSEU  | Cork Gay Project                 |
| Sarah Spencer, Chair of Equality and Diversity Forum, UK and Deputy Director, Compas, Oxford University | Samaritans                       |



# Appendix B: References

The evaluation consulted all of GLEN's internal documentation relevant to the review (including addresses associated with Ministerial launches) and also reviewed:

- Collins, Eoin (2009). *International Competitiveness and the New Economy*. Dublin: GLEN.
- Collins, Eoin and Brian Sheehan (2004). *Access to Health Services for Transsexual People*. Dublin: Equality Authority.
- Collins Eoin (2000). *Promoting Equality for Lesbian and Gay Men: Scoping Study on International Best Practice*. Dublin: Equality Authority.
- CSO (2007). *Equality in Ireland* Dublin: Stationery office.
- Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht, Pobal and the Family Support Agency (2009), *Code of Practice for Community Development Projects*.
- Department of Education and Science & GLEN (2009). *Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Students in Post-primary Schools - Guidance for Principals and School Leaders*.
- Dillon, Brian & Eoin Collins (2004). *Mental Health: Lesbians and Gay Men – Strategies to Promote the Mental Health of Lesbians and Gay Men*. Dublin: Northern Area Health Board and Gay HIV Strategies.
- Equality Authority (2002). *Implementing Equality for Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals*. Dublin: Author.
- GLEN (2010). *Completing the Task: GLEN Strategic Plan 2011 - 2015*,
- GLEN (2010). *Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Diversity in the Workplace*. Dublin: Author.
- GLEN (2005). *The Building Sustainable Change Programme: Investment Proposal for Submission to Atlantic Philanthropies*.
- GLEN/Nexus (1999). *Education: Lesbians and Gay Men*. Dublin: Authors.
- GLEN/Nexus (1996). *Poverty Lesbians and Gay Men. The Economic and Social Effects of Discrimination*. Dublin: Combat Poverty Agency.
- GLEN/Nexus (1996). *HIV Prevention Strategies and the Gay Community, Phase One Report*. Dublin: Authors.

- Gowran, Sandra (2004). "See no evil, speak no evil, hear no evil?' The Experiences of Lesbian and Gay Teachers in Irish Schools" in *Primary Voices: Equality, Diversity and Childhood in Irish Primary Schools*, Deegan, Jim, Devine, Dymphna & Lodge, Anne, (eds). Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.
- Irish College of General Practitioners/GLEN (2008). *Lesbian, gay and bisexual patients: the issues for general practice*. Dublin: ICGP.
- Irish Institute of Mental Health Nurses/GLEN (2010). *Gay, lesbian and bisexual people: a good practice guide for mental health nurses*. Dublin: IIMHN.
- Lodge, Anne, Sandra Gowran and Karen O'Shea (2002). *Valuing Visibility: An Exploration of How Sexual Orientation Issues Arise and Are Addressed in Post-Primary Schools Summary Report*. Department of Education NUI Maynooth, Department of Education & Science and GLEN.
- Mayock, Paula., Audrey Bryan, Nicola Carr and Karl Kitching (2009). *Supporting LGBT Lives: A Study of Mental Health and Well-being of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People*. Dublin: BeLonG To and GLEN. Funded by National Office for Suicide Prevention, HSE.
- National Economic and Social Forum (2003). *Equality Policies for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People: Implementation Issues*. Forum Report No. 27.
- National Lesbian and Gay Federation (2008). *Burning issues; Listening to the Voices of the LGBT Community in Ireland*.
- Norman, James, Miriam Galvin and Gerry McNamara (2006). *Straight Talk: Researching Gay and Lesbian Issues in the Schools Curriculum*. Dublin: Centre for Educational Disadvantage, DCU.
- O'Carroll, Íde and Eoin Collins (Eds.) 1996. *Lesbian and Gay Visions of Ireland: Towards the 21st Century*. London: Cassells.
- Pobal. (2006). *More than a Phase: A Resource Guide for the inclusion of LGBT Learners in formal and non-formal education*. Local Development Social Inclusion Programme.
- PSEU (2009). *Survey of LGBT Members on Workplace Issues*.
- Psychological Society of Ireland, (2009). *Policy on equality and inclusive practice*. Dublin: PSI.
- Rose, Kieran (1993). *Diverse Communities: The Evolution of Lesbian and Gay Politics in Ireland*. Cork: Cork University Press.
- Ryan, F.Dr. (2009). *Civil Partnership: Your Questions Answered. A Comprehensive Guide to the Civil Partnership Bill*. Dublin: GLEN.
- The California Endowment (2009). *What Makes an Effective Advocacy Organisation? A Framework for Determining Advocacy Capacity*.
- Working Group on Domestic Partnership (2006). *Options Paper*. Dublin: Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

GLEN, *The Building Sustainable Change Programme*, Investment Proposal for Submission to the Atlantic Philanthropies, 2005

Equality Authority, *Implementing Equality for Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals*, 2002

National Economic and Social Forum, *Equality Policies for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People: Implementation Issues*, report no. 27, April 2003.

CSO, *Equality in Ireland*, 2007

*Supporting LGBT Lives: A Study of the Mental Health and Well-being of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People*, HSE, BelongTo, Glen and Children's Research Centre, 2009

*Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Students in Post-primary schools - Guidance for Principals and School Leaders*, Department of Education and Science and GLEN, 2009

Orlaigh Quinn, *Advisers or Advocates? The Impact of State Agencies on Social Policy*, IPA, 2008

*What Makes an Effective Advocacy Organisation? A Framework for Determining Advocacy Capacity*, The California Endowment, January 2009.

*Completing the Task: GLEN Strategic Plan 2011 - 2015*, July 2010

Pobal, *More than a Phase: A Resource Guide for the inclusion of LGBT Learners in formal and non-formal education*, Local Development social Inclusion Programme

PSEU, Survey of LGBT Members on workplace issues, 2009

*Valuing Visibility: An Exploration of how sexual orientation issues arise and are addressed in post-primary schools*, Department of Education, NUI Maynooth, and GLEN, 2006

National Lesbian and Gay Federation, *Burning issues: Listening to the Voices of the LGBT Community in Ireland*, 2008

*Report of the Working Group on Domestic Partnership, Options Paper*, 2006.