



Universal Periodic Revision Report «UPR» 2008 **(Colombia)**

1. TRANS-SER¹ is a network created to provide psychological, medical, legal and social support to transgender people and their relatives; in the familiar, educational and working context. The term transgender includes: cross-dresser, transvestite, transvestite in the closet, transsexual, androgynous, intersex and cyborgs. The definitions presented below have been extracted from the medical records of who have been received services from TRANS-SER:

Cross-dresser: The cross-dresser is born male, wears female clothes and make-up, changes the name and plays a feminine role for definite periods of time. This person finds delightful every step in the cross-dressing process as well as representing the feminine role.

Transvestite: This person is born male and feels the desire of being a woman, however the circumstances did not allow him to reach the goal. The transvestite wears female clothes and

¹ TRANS-SER is a network working in different scenarios, transforming social imaginaries and public policies in the fields of concepts, gender identity experiences and sexual orientation. We also protect the exercise of human rights and the citizenship of transgender people and people who practice sexuality different from the hegemonic. We work with a competent team of people committed to diversity, and we interact with LGBT, feminist, government and educational institutions, as well as social participation spaces.



mainly plays the female role as part of his life, does some

body changes include: take hormones, change the name and call himself «transvestite».

Transvestite in the closet: A person born male who lives a dual life, having one role as a man and another role as a woman. Transvestites in the closet have separate names, social circles, and gender identities, the cross-dressing is carried out in private or in the companion of a small and close group of similar friends. Often their everyday social circle is unaware of the person's other identity.

Transsexual: A person, who wishes with great intensity to represent the roll of opposed sex-gender to which was assigned at the time of the birth. Perform corporal transformations, change name, the majority of them go to Sexual Reassignment Surgery and they introduce themselves in the society as people of the opposite sex-gender.

Androgynous: A person, who does not need a classification in neither of the two culturally institutionalized rolls of gender feels as human.

Intersexed: A person, who has alterations in the development of his sexual phenotype as a result of a genetic or hormonal alteration, generally begins in the intrauterine life and can to carry difficulties to assume the gender roll. Since the childhood the person is involved in medical treatments.

Cyborg: This term is mostly used among youth people. The person who in a social and political context assumes itself like indefinite in a cultural gender: feminine – masculine.

Transgenderism: This term makes reference to the process of transit through the gender. Also refers to the social movement for the human rights of the transgender people.



2. Along these years, TRANS-SER has provided services to 4 cross-dressing, 23 travesties, 5 travesties in the closet, 53 transsexuals at different stages of their process, 3 androgynous, 1 intersexed and 3 cyborgs. Currently 7 children who are between the ages 5 to 17 are being attended. Who express to feel their gender different that the society is demanding to them to represent.

3. In Colombia transgender people can change the name by a simple legal mechanism, but they must assume the cost of the hormonal therapy and surgeries procedures, even though a legal mechanism exists to claim for it called «Acción de Tutela», created by National Constitution 1991, this process require legal consultant and might take a long time. The LGBT movement has fortified these changes in the national jurisprudence, and these profits. Trans-ser has recommended a process in witch citizens can understand the gender identity and the right to freely choose the gender identity away from binary paradigm feminine/masculine.

4. In Colombia the institutional and legal framework conceives the gender (or gender role) as a rigid and binary paradigm imposed on the bodies shape at the time of birth. Alterations to this paradigm are punished with the loss of fundamental rights. To demand and to recover them implicates psychological, social, professional and economic expenses.

5. The social movement and the political willingness of the Bogotá Mayor for the period 2004 - 2007, contributed to create the Sexual Diversity Office, instance in charge of designing the public policies for LGBT population, implement it and promote it. The Decree 608 of December 28, 2007 states..., «through which the public policy guidelines are given for the full guarantee of the rights of the LGBT population and about gender identities and sexual orientation in the District, and other dispositions are dictated». Some other district offices have specialized staff to be in charge of this subject, these are the Health Department, Social

Department, Community Integration Department, District Government Office, Cultural Department, Educational Department, among others.



6. Currently there is a special emphasis on the transgenderism theme because of:

- implications of the binary paradigm on children and youth,
- violence against cross-dressers and transvestites manifested through: expulsion of home at early age, expulsion of school, physical and verbal aggression in the streets and in many cases they are murdered.

7. Based on the knowledge of transgenderism in Colombia, accumulated along these years is recommended to State:

- to consider the election of the gender identity as a right for the Colombians.
- to consider «gender» as a dynamic concept (a changing way of feeling) instead of a rigid and binary paradigm feminine/masculine.
- to analyze the fact of living the gender experience with an ethical perspective instead of a religious or a moral view.

Marina Talero Monroy
marinatalero@trans-ser.com