

Every month RESURJ members will collectively share and reflect on some news highlights affecting sexual and reproductive, environmental and economic justice from the different regions and countries we work in... [read online](#)

Brazil's Outsourcing Labour Laws Disadvantage Workers

By: Sinara Gumieri

The unelected Brazilian President Michel Temer has recently signed a [labour outsourcing law](#), which allows for broader use of outsourced labor by private companies and government agencies. Outsourced labour – in which a company contracts other companies to provide it with labor force, instead of hiring workers directly – has been a reality in Brazil for years. But until now, the Brazilian Labor Court System had banned the outsourcing of core activities and it has been mainly used for cleaning and maintenance services. The recently passed law allows companies to outsource any of its activities under the alleged need to modernize labor laws and let employers focus more on their core business areas and is said to facilitate the hire of temporary labor and job creation.

In theory, the intermediary company which offers outsourced labor to other companies has to uphold all of its workers rights, such as minimum wage, paid vacation, mandatory employer contribution to social security. But in reality, labor outsourcing reduces employers' accountability. A common scheme for outsourced labor providers to evade labor laws is to declare bankruptcy after months or a few years of business. This makes workers vulnerable as they don't have the resources to pursue their labor claims against their employer and legally don't have the right to make their demands directly to the company provided with their services. The only thing most workers get is a promise to be hired by the next outsourced labor providers taking over the business. Labor outsourcing is a clever strategy to make employment more precarious and to chip away at

labor rights. Evidence shows its [dire consequences](#): compared to regular workers, outsourced workers work 3 hours more per week, get 24% less payment, are the victims of 80% of fatal workplace accidents and compose 90% of workers rescued from modern slavery.

Fiji: "Family is about Keeping Myself and the People I Care for Safe and Happy and it Should also be Centred on Respect and Responsibilities for Each Other. "*"

By: Viva Tatawaqa

For decades "family" has been defined as having a father figure, a mother figure and children in the picture. As we move forward and accept changes that occur with time, this definition begins to expand and so too, does the analysis behind the term family.

The 21st century showcases a variety of family units which differ in their composition. Today, children are raised in single parent homes, by grandparents, or by homosexual parents. Some families opt to have no children, or cannot have children due to some medical or emotional barrier. Also, the idea that parents and children make a family is a basic, more traditional definition. But, in order to accurately acknowledge other family structures, a broader definition is necessary. In addition to a more traditional definition of family, there are also plenty of people who consider a group of friends to be family, and adults who consider pets as defining members of the family unit.

These types of family units, while untraditional, can be just as close, if not closer, than a traditional structure. The friends an individual chooses to associate with may be more special or important than the family a person was born into. In addition,

some people who have supportive families also have an extensive network of friends who they consider to be a second family or as additions to their blood or legal relatives.

My family is the people I am related to by blood, but also people with which I build my life with everyday. I can have several families in my lifetime. I can even have several families at once depending on what I am doing with my work at the time and where I am located. Regardless of how you choose to define your family unit, whether it is traditional or unique, your definition of what constitutes a family unit should really be about what works for you. As the saying goes, "Family is what you make it."

*This excerpt is from an article published on the [Feminist Voices](#) blog. To read the full article, click [here](#).

The Missing Women in Pakistan's Population Census

By: Sheena Hadi

In late 2016, the Supreme Court of Pakistan ordered the government to initiate the 6th [national population census](#), which was originally planned for 2008 but delayed twice due to a lack of sufficient army troops to support in the undertaking. However, now with 200,000 army personnel committed and a 9-year anticipation for updated information on population development and shifts in Pakistan, the design and implementation of the census leaves much to be desired.

At the outset, [the inclusion of a third gender category](#) to meet the demands of the transgender community was a welcome addition to the census. However, while data on gender, age, marital status and religion is being collected, critical information on internal migration, mortality, fertility and other social indicators, such as disabilities is being left out due to [the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics \(PBS\) insisting that there is not enough time to collect the data](#). In addition, UNFPA has provided clear recommendations to include a pilot phase and rule out inconsistencies in data collection, which have also been ignored.

A great deal of the criticism aimed at the census data collection points towards the need for accurate population statistics as the census has a

constitutional function related to inter-provincial resources allocation and how national assembly seats are distributed. However, being a key piece of population development planning, there is also a critical part of the consensus, which addresses social challenges, such as nutritional deprivation and poor education outcomes, and within those, gender-specific challenges. In previous censuses, women and girls were not counted adequately, and as a result, [gender ratio was impacted](#). The PBS has clear guidelines on how to improve gender equality and showcases a number of consultations and steps taken to ensure more meaningful data will be collected on women. However, upon inspection, no female enumerators have been included in the census, which clearly violates the PBS's gender policy. The significance of this decision, on the surface, relates to strict cultural codes, particularly in tribal areas, which will prohibit male enumerators from interacting with [female women of the household in the case that no male relative is present](#). And at a deeper level, the decision to withhold female enumerators speaks more to the lip service that the government continues to provide with pro-women laws and policies that are based on very little implementation or accountability. PBS has been unable to respond with an official reason for why women were denied involvement in data collection. Perhaps, this is because the real reason lies in the lack of prioritization of women at all levels, particularly with regards to development planning. Or perhaps the inherent discomfort that continues with having women exist in public spaces speaks volumes for itself.

Senegal: Amour, famille, hypocrisie et discriminations légales au Sénégal*

Par: Diakhoumba Gassama

Ce mois-ci, je veux vous parler en français. J'aimerais d'ailleurs vous parler en Mandingue, ma langue maternelle de Casamance au Sud du Sénégal mais voilà la majorité des mots que je voudrais utiliser n'existe pas dans nos langues. Ces mots sont « compagnon », « compagne », « union libre », « hétéronormativité », « homophobie », « transphobie », « lesbophobie » et tout ce qui peut définir ma vision de toutes les familles dans ce contexte.

Je voudrais commencer cette réflexion très personnelle en vous disant qu'il y a quatre ans, j'ai fait une promesse à une femme mourante de me marier à un homme sénégalais de préférence du Sud du Sénégal. Cette femme, ma maman, avait jusqu'à son dernier souffle, essayé de convaincre mes deux grandes sœurs, en couple/union libre avec des jeunes hommes français et pères de leurs enfants, de se marier religieusement au moins pour pouvoir les qualifier de « mari » et « femme » dans les cercles sociaux et familiaux élargis. Mais son soucis était aussi de respecter le fait que dans notre société, la relation de couple et la filiation ne sont reconnues et légitimées que dans le contexte des mariages (traditionnel, religieux ou civil entre un homme et une femme). J'ai passé des années à en vouloir à mes sœurs de ne pas offrir ce petit confort à notre mère et encore plus alors qu'elle était mourante. Ce n'est que bien après que je me suis rappelée que l'un de mes principes fondamentaux est le respect de la liberté de chacun à décider de tout ce qui le ou la concerne.

*This excerpt is from an article published on the [Feminist Voices](#) blog in French. To read the full article, click [here](#).

Sri Lanka: Standing in Solidarity with our Muslim Sisters*

By: Sachini Perera

A country's laws must respond to and reflect the lived realities of its people and uphold their fundamental rights as human beings. It has become more apparent than ever as the country goes through [a process of constitutional reform](#) that Sri Lanka has a fair share of laws that don't do so and result in violating people's basic human rights. These include archaic laws from our colonial past such as the Vagrants Ordinance of 1841, sections 365 and 365A of the Penal Code that criminalize homosexuality, and certain customary and personal laws. The latter are Kandyan law (applicable to people of Kandyan origin), Tesawalamai law (applicable to Tamil people from the North of the country) and Muslim law (applicable to Sri Lankan Muslims). These laws mostly pertain to inheritance and marriage, and contain provisions that discriminate against women when it comes to the ownership, inheritance, transfer and disposal of

land and property, as well as legal capacity, marriage, divorce, and custody of children.

Currently these discriminatory provisions and laws remain unchallenged due to [Article 16 \(1\) of the present Constitution](#), which prevents judicial review of any laws that have been in existence before 1978 (this amounts to over 600 laws introduced by statutes before 1978), even when they are inconsistent with the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution, including the right to equality and the right to non-discrimination. Therefore there are calls to repeal Article 16(1) in the new Constitution and the expected result of this is not to get rid of personal laws and other laws prior to 1978 but to ensure that all Sri Lankan citizens, regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, etc., would have access to remedy if their individual rights are violated by these laws.

*This excerpt is from an article published on the [Feminist Voices](#) blog. To read the full article, click [here](#).

UK Benefits and Housing Changes Impact LGBT Young People, Young Women and Single Parents

By: Mari-Claire Price

In April, the government introduced devastating changes to the UK welfare system, whilst simultaneously attempting to 'acknowledge' the daily struggles of what they have termed 'JAMs'- Just About Managing Families. 37% of people in the UK identify as being what the government is now calling 'JAMs'; people who are working but struggling to afford a basic living, and are at most risk of sliding deeper into poverty.

The reductive and dangerous approach to grouping people in this way fails to consider people's many intersecting experiences and marginalizations, and the government's supposed focus on 'ordinary working families', whilst systematically destroying the benefits system over the past few years, is hypocrisy in action.

Many people will feel the impacts of [the changes being introduced](#), which include in-work benefit conditionality, cuts to disability benefits if a person

is considered 'fit for work related activity', jobs seekers allowance conditions and sanctions applied to those with preschool children, as well as a 4 years freeze and cap on child tax credits to a maximum of 2 children. The [new cap on child tax credits](#) also requires those women whose child is a result of a rape, [to prove it](#), for the rule to not apply in that instance.

The government has said that the cap on child tax credits is being introduced to “encourage people to consider whether they can afford to support additional children.” This is grounded in the discriminatory view that many families, especially poorer families, have more children in order to earn higher tax credits. As with most benefits changes, women will most feel the impacts. Of all in-work families receiving child tax credits, 87% are women, and of all in-work single parents receiving child tax credits, 94% are women.

Housing benefits for young people aged 18-21 have also been scrapped altogether. Recent research shows a growing numbers of young LGBT people being forced out of their homes because of violence, homophobia, transphobia and discrimination in the UK, LGBT young people accounting for 24% of homeless young people.

These housing benefits changes will no doubt impact LGBT young people, refugee and migrant young people as well as people from low income communities and young families for many years to come.