

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](#)

State-created disabilities and criminalization of children in immigration detention in Canada by Nelly Bassily

[An open letter](#) addressed on June 27, 2018 to Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Minister of Health; Ralph Goodale, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness; and Ahmed D. Hussen, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, stated: “over the past 6 years, Canada has held approximately 45,000 people in immigration detention. For the first time in over a decade, Canada is projected to see a sharp rise in the total number of detainees.”

Over 2000 healthcare providers working in Canada signed this open letter, concerned with the recent news of the separation of over 2000 child migrants from their parents in the US. Using the momentum from these recent events, the letter sought to call the world’s attention to the fact that the Canadian government is very far from having a squeaky clean reputation when it comes to the detention of migrant adults, their children, or the separation of families in its own immigration detention system. The [Geneva-based Global Detention Project](#), an international research group that promotes the human rights of migrants in detention also recently slammed Canada for its [culture of secrecy surrounding immigration detention](#).

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

Another 50:50 Campaign in Malawi by Umba Zalira

The sixth multiparty general elections are fast approaching in Malawi. This means yet another [50-50 parity campaign](#) that lobbies for increased women’s participation in the upcoming elections. The campaign was started in 2004 with women representation in parliament at 7%. Ten years later, the number was at 22%. In the 2014 elections, only 30 women were successful in attaining seats in the parliament and this was the same year we had the first two female presidential candidates.

Malawi has made various strides in women’s rights and empowerment since the referendum in 1993. Joyce Banda was the first female vice-president in Malawi and she later became president due to the passing of the late Bingu Wa Mutharika. Women account for half of the population in Malawi so why are we still having low representation in political spaces?

We need more than just one-off campaign. We need to be deliberate in training, mentoring and preparing girls and young women to aspire to join politics. We cannot continue to ignore the oppressive and violent environments that politics operates in, if we need more women in political

spaces; let's back that up with laws, policies and resources at national and political party levels.

Violence Against Women in Pakistan: Seeking Justice in a Patriarchal Court System by Sheena Hadi

Two years ago, Khadija Siddiqui was stabbed 23 times in broad daylight, by Shah Hussain, a fellow student, on a busy street in Lahore. The impetus for the attack was that Hussain felt scorned by Khadija after she ended a relationship with him in which, she felt controlled and threatened. After a social media frenzy which demanded justice for Khadija, Hussain was sentenced to 7 years in prison for attempted murder. However, in a shocking decision in early June 2018, Hussain was acquitted by the Lahore high court on grounds that [accused Siddiqui of being interested in publicity](#) and was actually the one who had pursued Hussain in the first place.

Now Khadija is courageously fighting back stating hers is a "test case" which lays out the challenges in the justice system where women are forced to prove that they are victims. Khadija stated, "We are the targets of character assassination, and when it comes to motive, the onus is on the woman to prove her innocence instead of the criminal's guilt." Stating an example from her trial, [Khadija has exposed the misogyny of the court system](#) in which the judge in her case repeatedly suggested that she must have done something to warrant the attack and that it was up to her to prove the motive of the attacker. The proceedings and subsequent acquittal also reveal how economic class and social status continue to influence justice for women as Hussain is the son of a successful lawyer based in Lahore.

The national response to the acquittal has been tremendous with celebrities, women's groups and ordinary citizens, particularly young women, using

social media as a platform to [demand justice for Khadija](#). As a result, Pakistan's supreme court has taken its own initiative to issue a suo moto (the court's independent investigation) to re-examine the case. The decision has provided some hope that the justice system at the highest levels is taking cases of violence against women more seriously and that public outcry can trigger a response from Pakistan's state institutions. Khadija has stated, "Thousands of women are killed across the world. I was one of the rare few who survived, so I have been given the chance to be an example for all women." For her courage and willingness to push through the worst that a patriarchal society throws at women to silence them, we can only thank her and hope that justice is realized.

Reproducing the gender inequalities of care economy: Challenging ourselves to walk the talk by Chantal Umuhoza

A few months ago, I was invited to a meeting out of the country. I was suppose to receive full financial support for this trip. But, to my dismay, the invitation was cancelled when the organizer (an international women's rights network) learnt that they would incur more costs because I had to travel with my few-months-old baby. The knowledge and experience I was going to bring to this meeting didn't matter anymore. The amount of money they would have to spend to accommodate me and my baby was more important and warranted a cancellation. To them, it was not "cost efficient" and there wouldn't be "value for money" given they would incur costs almost double of what they incurred with other participants. So I became easily replaceable, just like that.

This reminded me of a similar incident. I was organizing an event where we invited women leaders from cooperatives to a meeting. The hotel

in Kigali where we would host the event asked me not to invite women with babies because, according to them, they would incur more costs for cleaning. Some of the women had babies and because I didn't want them to miss this meeting, I instead asked them if they might be able to leave their babies with their partners for the time they were away. They said this was "unheard of". That men don't take care of babies. I then considered asking them to find someone else to attend from their cooperatives. But then I realized that these asks were unfair because these women were being punished for having babies. So, I informed the hotel that if they can't host the women with their babies, I was moving the meeting to another hotel that would be able to accommodate them. They finally accepted.

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The hypocrisy of outrage over Trump: Feminists must critically examine EU migrant policies, too by Mari-Claire Price

European women's movements have [failed to really have any real critical analysis of](#) the right wing messaging around migration. This, a result of three decades of the dominance of a neoliberal, white, mainstream European women's movement, that centralizes a woman's experience and needs around reproductive lives and pay equality, and who's only discussion point related to migration, is trafficking. Thankfully, in some countries, this 'mainstream' feminism is being surpassed [by a more socialist feminism](#), that addresses the intersections of class, race, gender, allowing opportunity for a much more intersectional and people-focused analysis related to migration and the experiences of refugee and asylum seeking women.

European feminist movements must develop a critical analysis of EU migration policies, and be willing to question, call on, and speak out against the EU and member states, and show as much outrage towards them as they do the Trump administration's policies. They must examine the crises that are the catalysts for 'irregular migration', and how their governments and the EU are complicit; conflicts supported or ignored by the same EU governments that turn away those displaced by them; the role of the EU as imperial powers, the war mongers in our governments and others who profit for conflict and instability in regions; examine the discrimination and challenge refugees and asylum seekers face when they arrive, especially women; the crises of inadequate refugee and asylum programmes across EU countries, the lack of funding, and dwindling specialized services ravaged by austerity; the crises of racism and xenophobia and the rise of the right; all catalysts for the dangerous journey people set out on, and the dangerous situations they often arrive to.

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