

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](#)

A surge of fake abortion clinics in Canada by Nelly Bassily

The struggle for free, legal and safe abortions in Canada has been a long struggle, with a complicated and controversial history fraught with its fair share of [eugenic practices](#) and forced sterilization of those considered to be 'minorities', such as Indigenous, immigrant, Black and disabled women.

Abortion is [legal in Canada](#). Canada is one of only a few nations with no legal restrictions on abortion. In recent years, fake abortion clinics (also known as crisis pregnancy centers) have been making their presence ever more felt by taking advantage of a time in a person's life that, for some people, can be rife with doubt and fear, to essentially feed them misinformation about abortion and guilt people in keeping unwanted pregnancies without presenting abortion as a viable option. The fake clinics are usually run by religious/faith-based organizations that attempt to convince pregnant persons* to change their mind.

With names like "Aid to Women" or "Pregnancy Care Centre," the fake clinics usually have innocuous-sounding names in an attempt to confuse and obfuscate so that, to the untrained-eye, the clinics don't look like they're being run by anti-choice individuals or organizations with conservative mandates. These same anti-abortion/anti-choice groups will also falsely make it look like they advocate for people with

disabilities. Which is why it is crucial for feminists to use a disability rights lens in abortion rights discourse and campaigns, so that anti-choicers can't continue to monopolize the discourse.

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

Between Family Planning and Birth Control - There Is No Contraception

By Nana Abuelsoud

Last May, UNFPA in partnership with the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity launched a national family planning campaign covering 10 Egyptian governorates. "Etnin kefaya / Two [children] is Enough" is the imposing title given to this national campaign. As a sexual and reproductive rights advocate, I followed the news both in Arabic and English as it pertains to this national campaign, and I have found that, the messages are not clear or consistent! In Arabic, we see that the term "birth control" is replaced with "family planning" in all of the communication for this campaign. I grew up hearing that "birth control" stands against "God's will". Because of this perception, national campaigns adopted "family planning" as a stand-in for birth control to make it sound rather neutral. There is a sense of power share in 'planning', which does not amount to the one in 'control'.

On the other hand, reading news in English about this national campaign feels very numerical. "Egypt hits 104.2M[1]", with a strategic economic

framework to curb population growth and address exhausted national resources. Lots of numbers and figures which make me question the reasons for the dual messages for the same campaign.

Simultaneously, [USAID](#) renewed once more its decades-long partnership on family planning projects with the Egyptian state, this time in collaboration with Ministry of Health and Population and the US Research and Training Institute, John Snow.

In some reports, the expressed aim of this long-standing partnership is to change behaviors around family planning within the family system. Interchangeably using “birth control” and “family planning”, there is no mention of “contraception.” Contraception suggests no marital status and connotes no partnership. To stay consistent with what is “culturally appropriate,” apparently no sex ever happens outside of marriage! This leaves behind undocumented partnerships and sexually active youth who struggle to access sexual and reproductive health services. There is a large body of evidence on [behaviors](#) and [routines](#) related to family in Egypt. Yet, the largest population group, especially young women, are left alone with feelings of guilt, shame, anxiety of unplanned pregnancies, and the real risk of potentially unsafe abortions.

In 2015, I, along with coworkers, conducted evaluative visits in three governorates (Sohag, Assiut and Sharqia) known to be the most populist. During one of our visits, I realized that the majority of the women I interviewed, who answered our project’s awareness home visits on family planning, knew all about the different methods and shared openly how their bodies reacted differently to each. The same women who ran households with “too many kids.” This made me reflect on positionality. I

came from centralized Cairo to a UN-select governorate in southern Egypt to dictate to those women what they should be doing with their bodies. If those women know all about family planning, what is the point of replicating home visits or national awareness campaigns without seeking an understanding from those decisions prior to allocating a \$19 million budget?

[1] The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS)

A Conversation with Chantal Umuhoza on Feminism in Rwanda by ‘Living the Talk’

Judicaelle Irakoze and Chantal Umuhoza are both young Rwandan feminists that have founded young feminist organisations, respectively, [Choose Yourself](#) and [SPECTRA](#). They founded both these organizations as a way to mobilize fellow feminists, create safe spaces for fruitful dialogues among feminists and contribute to movement building in their country, as well as regionally and globally. All this with the vision to continue dismantling capitalism and other systems of oppressions, injustices and inequalities. In the following podcast, called ‘Living the Talk’, Chantal shares her thoughts with Judicaelle on Feminism in Rwanda, challenges and opportunities, and her own feministic journey.

Here’s a snippet of what Chantal has to say about feminism: “For me, feminism is a way of thinking, of doing, that seeks to resist and dismantle ecosystems of power that lead to inequalities, to discrimination, violence and injustices. [...] For me, it’s not about women being more powerful, rather it is about ensuring that everybody can live by principles of equality, justice, and freedom and that of their bodies, of their minds, irrespective of their sex, of their race, of their faith, of their sexual

orientation. [...] I also wanted to emphasize that I've also grown to know and understand that feminism is not a western concept like many tend to perceive but rather, it is embed in the culture and struggle of all women, all over the world. So, it is a struggle for liberation: socially, religiously, economically, politically, physically and psychologically of women because they are the ones who have been excluded and marginalized for centuries."

[Click here](#) to hear the entire conversation between Judicaelle and Chantal.

Reproductive Justice for the Mothers of the Disappeared in Sri Lanka

by Sachini Perera

Last month marked [500 consecutive days of the roadside protests](#) by families of the disappeared in the North and the East of Sri Lanka, that began in February 2017. As far as milestones go, this is one full of the pain, heartbreak and disappointment of not knowing what happened to your children, spouses and other family members who have been separated from you for years and for some, decades. The protests, led largely by mothers of the disappeared, began as a response to the constant and consistent failure of the Sri Lankan state and consecutive governments to provide answers on the whereabouts of their loved ones, information on what happened to them, or access to justice nearly a decade after the end of the war. As stated by [a civil society statement addressed to the President of Sri Lanka](#) quoted below, the mothers and families of the disappeared had reached the end of their tether.

These protests come after families have exhausted most other avenues, including appearing before previous commissions of inquiry and other investigative mechanisms, making appeals to

various state institutions, filing complaints with the Police and Human Rights Commission, making enquiries with the Army and Navy, and appealing to international bodies. In sheer desperation, they began and continue to protest.

Unfortunately, enforced disappearances are not a new phenomenon in Sri Lanka and even in 2009, [a United Nations study found that Sri Lanka had the second highest number of disappeared people in the world](#).

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Profit Feeding Profit - From Children's Homes to Prisons in the UK

by Mari-Claire Price

On August 20th 2018, news broke in the UK that the Ministry of Justice was taking the unprecedented step to take control of Birmingham prison from British-owned multinational security contractor [G4S](#), seven years into its fifteen year contract, [following a damning report](#) into conditions at the prison.

Birmingham prison is 1 of 5 prisons run by the infamous security group, and [1 of the 15% of prisons](#) run by private companies in the UK, with contracts totalling nearly £4bn. The report and failures that led to the decision to pull the contract, is the most recent in a long line of failings that are coming to the fore after years of de-nationalisation and privatization of public services. From social services, [rehab centres, probation services](#), overground [and underground](#) transport systems, the national health services, immigration services, [even railway arches](#); no service or space has been

safe from the threat or very real selling of public services [in the past 3 decades](#).

Over the last 30 years, the prison population in England and Wales has increased by nearly 85% to [85,000](#) in 2018 - the highest number of people in prison in western Europe. The sharp upward surge coincides with a sharp increase in the severity of criminal sentences across the board. And not so coincidentally, the increases followed soon after the option to privatize prisons [became law](#). The number of women in prison [has doubled since 1995](#). Many of these women are from marginalized or vulnerable communities - 46% of whom reported being survivors of domestic violence and 31% of whom reported spending time in local authority (local government) care as a child. A quarter of the prison population are from minority ethnic groups (compared to 14% of the general population) and the number of black prisoners [is 4 times higher](#) than within the general population.

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