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TITLE

**Making the connections: A review of RESURJ's
feminist dialogues and convenings
2011-2019**

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Reflections in the context of Covid 19

We are very excited to share this assessment of RESURJ convenings over the last ten years. However, since this assessment was conducted at the end of 2019 and beginning of 2020, times have changed significantly. As Covid-19 has become a global pandemic there have been

significant social, political and economic shifts that took place that will shape the future for many activists and feminists.

The global health pandemic is having a significant impact on many aspects of our lives as individuals, in our social and working relationships and ways in which our societies and cultures are formulated and structured. The impacts will take some time for us to fully understand. However, the pandemic has revealed the true extent and impact of deeply entrenched structural inequalities at global, regional and national levels. In many ways the pandemic has meant old divisions and tensions have re-emerged[1] and marginalisation and exclusion of certain communities has worsened[2].

However, one of the most critical issues is the extent to which this pandemic has impacted on women's rights and bodily autonomy and integrity; and what this means for feminists, activists and advocates of women's rights and gender equality in the present and in the future.

Social distancing or social isolation?

Many countries have reacted to the pandemic with immediate, strict and in many cases, penalized and long lasting lockdowns. As some countries emerge from lockdowns, other countries plan to reintroduce lockdown measures as the number of cases continues to increase exponentially[3]. The messaging of many was 'we are all in this together', but the reality was not the same for many communities[4]. One prominent South African feminist shares the stark reality that for many social distancing 'may keep people alive, but there will be a cost. Communities that already feel under siege will be further wounded'[5]. Another feminist writes about her experience of living in Lagos, Nigeria where 'even if we wanted to, we simply don't have the space to socially distance from one another...the idea of social distancing is not just alien to us, it is impossible for social and economic reasons too'[6]. Social interaction and social engagement are a pleasure as well as an economic necessity. In most serious cases, lockdowns put women's lives at risk. Early on in the crisis there was evidence that gender-based violence had been exacerbated as a result of this crisis and the need for women to stay at home[7]. However, in the longer-term – what does social distancing mean for the 'social' aspect of meeting, which is often sidelined in favour of the economic need? What does this mean for feminist organizing? Can the online spaces really be a substitute for face-to-face interaction and do we want a substitute? In addition, to what extent are the constant demands for online engagement, webinars and zoom calls impacting on the mental health of activists? As one commentator highlighted, 'the sheer number of webinars right now are mostly due to the external and internal expectations of visibility, performance and credibility, which do not give us the luxury to slow down, breathe and take time to regroup...'¹

The importance of economic justice

¹ <https://sachinip.wordpress.com/2020/06/18/webinars-and-feminist-ways-of-knowing/>

It is now clear that this pandemic will result in a global recession[8]. However, for many food insecurity and deepening financial poverty is already a reality. What does the impact of this crisis on sustainable livelihoods, food and housing security mean for critical work on Sexual and Reproductive Justice (SRJ)? Nonetheless, as the Report on the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World illustrates, the linkages between food insecurity and SRJ are often ignored. The focus remains on pregnancy and maternal health rather than taking a rights or justice approach to sexual and reproductive health[9]. Anecdotally there are many examples of donors just wanting to fund Covid-19 responses that are 'blind' to critical issues such as women's rights, gender equality and SRJ. What does this mean for ensuring an intersectional response to the impact of Covid-19 and ensuring that the rights already secured are not clawed back by governments under the façade of 'economic recovery'?

Moving our whole worlds online...

For many younger feminists and activists, seamlessly navigating the online and offline spaces was an integral part of their activism[10]. But should we celebrate how easily we have been able to move everything online? What does this mean for our mental health and wellbeing? There are structural inequalities in the online spaces as well – how do we address these? The crisis itself has highlighted the need for governments to be more innovative and open in their engagement with technology[11]. This crisis has emphasized again that issues of accessibility to information are a critical challenge, particularly for communities living in rural areas of many countries. However, some governments have also been accused of mis-use of technology during the crisis to target certain communities or populations [12]. Still, as activists, online spaces need to be safe from government interference and control. Thus far, many reports have highlighted women's and LGBTQI experiences of abuse online[13]. How do we grapple with the need to engage online and assess the risk and/or the safety of online spaces?

Human rights in the age of draconian measures to 'protect us from the virus':

The introduction of emergency powers by many governments gave police extra powers of detention and limited our duty of care towards more vulnerable and marginalized individuals[14]. Police in the UK used drones to name and shame individuals violating 'stay-at-home' rules[15], South African police fired rubber bullets at people queuing outside a supermarket in Johannesburg[16] and tear gas was sprayed at shoppers in Kenya[17]. In addition, many countries deployed or plan to deploy the military to help the response to coronavirus. What does this mean in many countries where we work with communities already marginalized and excluded or living under repressive regimes or constantly facing threats to their lives and bodies? For many women living in states of fragility, states of conflict, occupation or post-conflict, draconian laws that limit freedom of movement, increased police and military power and criminalized marginalized communities could have far-reaching consequences on the bodily autonomy and freedom of women, adolescents, trans and non-binary people (many of whom already have freedoms curtailed and rights suppressed or violated). What does this mean for activists working on SRJ who are often targeted by governments and law enforcement? What

does this mean for human rights defenders? What does this mean for women working in the informal sector?

And finally...what does this mean for RESURJ's convenings in the future? Will the impact of this pandemic mean we need to re-evaluate all our ways of working and start afresh? Or is this pandemic an opportunity for positive transformation of broken, patriarchal and capitalist systems?

These reflections are intended to inform the recommendations that follow this report. The necessity of the RESURJ convenings is very clear, however, the future is uncertain and requires us to take time to reflect, re-think and re-plan the way forward.

Introduction

In 2019, RESURJ commissioned an assessment of the convenings it has held over the last ten years to analyse the following key questions: a) impact of different types of convenings; b) how strategic and necessary these convenings were for younger feminists in various regions; c) the contributions the convenings were making to the sexual reproductive justice organizing space; d) recommendations for strengthening and improving the ways of bringing together diverse groups of younger feminists together.

The consultant conducted a literature review, an online survey with all RESURJ participants in convenings, and individual interviews with members and non-members. This is a summary of the key highlights and recommendations from the assessment.

RESURJ will be using these recommendations to strengthen the ways the alliance organizes with younger feminists from and in the global south and to build upon its role as a convener and advocate for sexual reproductive justice.

This review is structured as follows:

1. Why was this review necessary and important? This section considers the key emerging issues affecting feminists and feminist organising.
2. What did the assessment ask? This section highlights some of the questions asked to RESURJ members and non members.
3. What did the assessment find out? This section presents the key findings and highlights from the review.
4. Recommendations. This section offers some recommendations to RESURJ.

Understanding RESURJ convenings:

This assessment explores the different gatherings and spaces that RESURJ has convened and co-convened over the last ten years. The convenings are clustered as follows:

Type of convening:	Participants:	Objectives/purpose:
Retreats	RESURJ members and advisors.	These are annual convenings just for members. Advisors are also invited to Retreats.They are described as ‘participatory and inclusive’ and the members drive the agenda and content for the retreats.

<p>Sexual and Reproductive Justice Dialogues</p>	<p>Convened by RESURJ. Participants are invited to apply based on their local, national or regional organizing. Open to young feminists from various movements.</p>	<p>These are convenings organised or co-convened by RESURJ and include members and non-members. Younger feminists and activists are invited to apply based on their organising locally, nationally and/or regionally. The process and the nature of the dialogues has shifted over time.</p>
<p>Thematic dialogues</p>	<p>These dialogues are convened by RESURJ. Participants are members and non-members invited to attend based on their expertise.</p>	<p>These convenings are organised around specific themes or issues and are intended to stimulate debate and discussion on critical issues relevant to younger South activists as well as strengthen evidence towards advocacy</p>
<p>The space</p>	<p>It is open to young feminists and newcomers to advocacy spaces in regional and global levels.</p>	<p>These are convenings organised or co-organised by RESURJ during high level meetings, for example, CSW. The space provides an opportunity for younger feminists and newcomers from the global south to connect with other during these global platforms, to find support, and to build joint intersectional analysis on global and regional processes.</p>

Section One

Why this review and why now?

Our context: a changing world

Despite increasing attention globally to the role of feminist thinking and movements, there has been only limited analysis about how these movements are adapting and evolving. Under conditions of globalisation, where technology facilitates the rapid spread of real world events and ideas, there are more and more opportunities for feminists to join and build collectives, organisations and movements. At the same time, we are witnessing a regression in global politics, with the election and media celebration of patriarchal, ultra-conservative, right-wing and often misogynist populist figures leading countries. These divisive figures have not only taken policy steps away from supporting hard won progressive policies by feminist movements, but have bolstered an ongoing backlash against feminist notions of public policy and programmes that advance gender equality, uphold women's human rights and sustainable development.

However, there is not one feminist movement. There is a multiplicity of feminist movements reflecting different opinions and struggles. It is also important to emphasise that there are power imbalances within the feminist movements, the power and political disparities between the Global North and South² as well as power dynamics at national and local levels³.

In light of the global shifts, the increased polarisation and divisiveness at a global level, this assessment considers how the RESURJ convenings can create a counter-reaction. This assessment documents the importance of solidarity, collective care and action, highlighting the possibility of RESURJ convenings to reduce isolation and to provide an alternative and collaborative space with freedom (and maybe safety) that activists might not have within their own context. As some interviews highlighted, being able to talk about issues such as LGBTQI+ movements means activists can have conversations, important to them, at an individual and organisational/collective level.

This assessment is also a celebration of the many different types of spaces that RESURJ has convened over the years. It also raises questions about how younger south feminists are organising and how RESURJ can continue to collaborate with them and support them across regions and across movements. This is a celebration and recognition of the convenings and collaborations, as well as an opportunity to take stock and reflect on how the convenings can be strengthened.

² A. Martins (2020) Reimagining equity: redressing power imbalances between the global North and the global South, *Gender and Development*, 28:1, 135-153.

³ M. Guha (2019) 'Do you really want to hear about my life?': doing 'feminist research' with women in sex work in Eastern India. *Gender and Development*, 27:3, 505-521

Sexual Reproductive Justice

In no domain is the backlash against feminist movements and the human rights of women and marginalized communities more obvious than in the sphere of sexual reproductive justice. In 2019 and 2020 landmark agreements reach important milestones - the 25th anniversary of ICPD and Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as well as five years since the Sustainable Development Goals were adopted, there are still extensive 'unmet needs and unfinished agendas'⁴. Women's bodily autonomy and integrity remains consistently under threat. The rights of individuals based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression are persistently violated and under threat. People living with disabilities still face extensive stigma and discrimination in accessing sexual reproductive services and rights. Sex workers and LGBTQI+ remain 'criminalised populations' in many countries across the world; and women human rights defenders, fighting on the frontline to protect sexual and reproductive rights, have been under attack.

However, despite the backlash, in development and human rights, women-centred and LGBTQI+ movements have become increasingly powerful agents for change⁵. These movements have at the very least triggered dialogues around equitable access to rights and resources and at best effected transformational change towards gender equity⁶. Nonetheless, it is also important to acknowledge and reflect how at times women-led and LGBTQI+ movements have created silos based on identity politics that haven't always effectively tackled the broader social and economic structural inequalities⁷. As this assessment highlights, RESURJ convenings have often created a critical opportunity for south younger feminists to take leadership and ownership in centering intersectionality and interlinkage in their organising and advocacy. **Younger feminists fighting back!**

One of the key benefits of the RESURJ convenings was highlighted by one respondent, ' (it was) driven by younger women, that is what was different – in many cases when we convene these spaces we often find that people from the outside come in and facilitate, but there was a clear focus on younger women'. Another respondent commented that 'spaces are not always accessible for younger women' noting that this made the RESURJ space different. There is a growing recognition in many circles of the importance of supporting and resourcing the participation and leadership of younger people, particularly younger women. As AWID and FRIDA Feminist Fund's report *Brave, Creative, Resilient* highlights younger feminist face serious threats to their safety and security as well as constraints accessing financial resources. However, younger Feminist Organisations (YFOs), formation and collectives are also using

⁴ <https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S2214-109X%2819%2930295-5>

⁵ S.Maseko, A. Sawas et al (2018) Gender-Based Violence Programming in contexts affected by violence and conflict, Christian Aid Ireland and S. Batliwala (2011) Feminist Leadership for Social Transformation: Clearing the Conceptual Cloud, CREA.

⁶ https://www.actionaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/guidance_note_good_practice_approaches_2016_0.pdf

⁷ Joseph Nicholas DeFilippis (2016) "What About the Rest of Us?" An Overview of LGBT Poverty Issues and a Call to Action, Journal of Progressive Human Services, 27:3, 143-174, DOI: [10.1080/10428232.2016.1198673](https://doi.org/10.1080/10428232.2016.1198673) and https://www.clac.cab/sites/default/files/document_library/economic-empowerment-programmes-for-sex-workers-africa.pdf and <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13504631003688849>

participatory approaches and methodologies, which was highlighted as a unique and important aspect of RESURJ convenings.

From self to collective:

There has been a gradual shift from the rights-based focus on the individual to seeing oneself as part of a wider collective, community or movement.

The emergence of the #MeToo movement illustrated not only the shift towards the need for collective action built on shared experiences, but also reinforced the ongoing problem within the feminist movement of attribution, acknowledgment and ownership of stories and experiences. There has been much written about the re-emergence of collective action in feminist spaces that has centred on experiences of violence. However, this overlooks the complexities that many feminist movements in the Global South are addressing and reflects a more Global North perspective. As *Feminist Africa* notes, 'the diverse contexts within which feminist organising across the African continent takes place today are still shaped by multiple layers of domination — imperial, colonial, military and/or authoritarian civilian rule'⁸. The acknowledgement of many layers that impact on feminist movements globally is reflected in feminist literature, but less so in wider literature. One respondent interviewed commented that it is evident that RESURJ's approach is Global South-led because 'we care about the process and the values and we want to have a political conversation' and the RESURJ convenings created that opportunity.

It is necessary to emphasise power dynamics in feminist collective spaces. There has been a growing recognition of the importance of power analysis in all development work to the extent that it has become more mainstream. However, this work has been informed by the feminist sector, for example, the work of JASS to analyse power dynamics within the collective to ensure that individual selves can actually 'shape...the practice of leadership'⁹ within feminist collectives or organisations. The analysis of power goes beyond the social structures of power and control that create and compound women's vulnerability and insecurity¹⁰ and instead seeks to locate power 'within' and 'to' as a process of both reclaiming agency and asserting power.

This is important due to concerns that the feminist agenda has privileged the voices and actions of white feminists in the Global North and not those who are most marginalized by patriarchy and the negative impacts of neoliberal economic policies and approaches.

Celebrating and affirming our impact

Many of the respondents wanted to celebrate RESURJ convenings as necessary and valuable. As the world changes and the backlash against women's rights has become arguably more severe, feminist movements are shifting and growing in response¹¹. However, it is increasingly challenging to resource feminist movements, convenings and actions. Respondents felt very

⁸ *Feminist Africa* 22, 2019

⁹ JASS (2006) MCH3 Power: Concepts for Revisioning Power for Justice, Equality and Peace. JASS

¹⁰ *Ibid*

¹¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/sep/06/metoo-movement-backlash-media-al-franken>

strongly that the dialogues were necessary to 'equip' themselves for the relentless backlash they face, the alternative organizing space hosted by RESURJ over a number of years, 'the space'¹², was an essential support base in international and overwhelming meetings. The retreats, RESURJ's members annual meetings, were necessary to 'reconnect' with each other in person and the thematic regional dialogues were learning and reflection spaces that were necessary for the work of activists in their own countries. All these factors contributed significantly to the work of the activists, for some on a personal level, but for the majority on a wider level in terms of their work, activism and involvement in the movement in their own countries

'We are disruptors, but that isn't negative...it is necessary' (interviewee for RESURJ assessment)

As many interviewees highlighted, there is still a generational divide in the feminist movement. There are many stereotypes and assumptions about younger feminists and the contribution they can make to the feminist discourse. Younger feminists are demanding to have a voice often at great risk to their personal and collective safety as this assessment illustrates.

What does safe space mean?

This review considered the importance of safe spaces and how these convenings could ensure and uphold the safety of all participants. Safe spaces are critical to create opportunities to be vulnerable and then build solidarity between participants. The emergence of spaces outside the convenings were testimony to the need to continue nurturing safe spaces for solidarity. RESURJ has a critical opportunity to build on the momentum created by the safe space of the convenings to strengthen advocacy at a local and national level.

In the discussion about safe spaces it is important to acknowledge how younger feminists often move seamlessly between online and offline spaces. It is a continuum and needs to be considered in this way to ensure that safety and security conversations are holistic.

Safety and security in different spaces

From a feminist perspective, safety and security, are about creating, providing and accessing safer spaces and ensuring that feminists can define what a safer space means for them - 'spaces where we can form a community and develop practical ways to strategise, together, on how to keep going...how to stay safe...'

An increasing form of backlash against women or LGBTQI+ rights work from State actors including military and police, private companies, corporations and government institutions in

¹² Now referred to as Feminist Community of Care (FemCom).

many contexts is to restrict their work or shrink the civic space¹³: deny registration for organisations, increase the hostility in the working environment, threaten organisations with closure or raids from authorities, impose legal sanctions and tighter punitive measures. Feminist organisations continue to highlight the specific risks faced by women's human rights defenders and the specifically gendered nature of attacks against them, however, support structures are often very limited¹⁴.

Online spaces have increasingly become the place for feminists to flourish as numerous spaces have emerged for creative, inspiring and substantive conversations and content to be shared and disseminated as well as debated and contested. Online spaces can provide critical access for those who have restricted mobility or for those who are isolated. The platforms can facilitate new connections and alliances.

And yet, as recent reports have highlighted the 'toxicity' of online spaces can be a serious risk to an individuals' safety and mental health. In research recently published by Amnesty International, the dilemma for feminists and activists is that many people feel more connected and 'part of a movement' on Twitter, but at the same time Twitter 'remains fertile ground for reinforcing existing gender inequalities and discrimination against women online'. In addition, access to online spaces is not equal for everyone and is often not autonomous. Online spaces still form part of the same social, political and economic structures that activists must navigate in 'offline' spaces.

¹³ <https://oecd-development-matters.org/2019/06/18/civic-space-is-shrinking-yet-civil-society-is-not-the-enemy/>

¹⁴ The recent report by the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights Defenders highlighted the rise in misogynistic, sexist and homophobic speech by political leaders in recent years which has normalised violence against women human rights defenders

SECTION 2:

Our methodology:

The consultant developed an online survey, conducted individual interviews and reviewed the reports written for the convenings.

1. Which dialogue/retreat/'the space' did you attend?
2. What did you enjoy about the convenings?
3. What is/are the common thread(s) that connect all these different types of convenings?
4. How would you describe RESURJ's approach to convenings/dialogues/retreats?
5. Did you connect with other feminists? Have you maintained those connections? How?

And then some questions that sought to delve a little deeper:

- Did you think the convenings/dialogues changed the way in which you, as a younger feminist, engaged in SRJ advocacy at national, regional and global levels?
- How did the convening you attended support your organising?
- How did participation in RESURJ convenings impact your work and activism?

Our methodology:

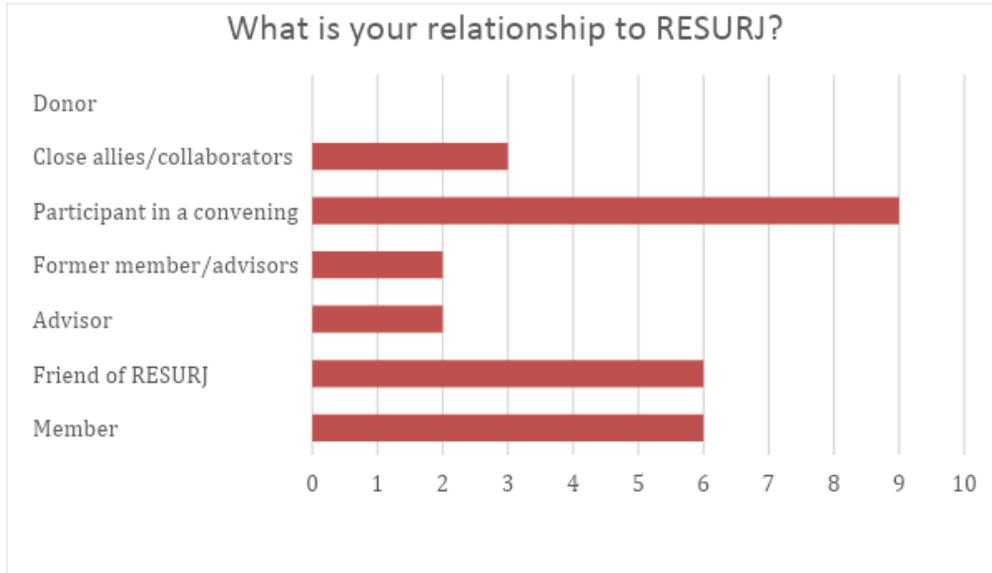
We used the following methods to ask questions:

1. Literature review
2. Online survey
3. Interviews
4. Discussion with RESURJ members

As a learning collective, RESURJ used a participatory approach to engage with participants from a range of RESURJ convenings. The participants identified as members/former members, Friends of RESURJ, allies, advisors or participants in convenings. As a result, a literature review, online survey and individual interviews were conducted as part of the process.

The survey was translated into English, French and Spanish. The **survey** was disseminated to members and non-members from all 20 RESURJ convenings over the past 10 years and was completed by 26 participants from **three** different regions: Africa, South West Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. While the survey was disseminated across all the regions RESURJ has had a presence in, the survey did not yield responses from Asia or the Pacific which are also the regions where RESURJ is currently strengthening connections in. Of these participants 20 identified as female and 1 as gender non-conforming.

The survey was completed by 26 respondents, however, only 21 respondents completed the survey in full. The survey was completed by members, friends of RESURJ, advisors, former members or advisors, participants in a convening and close allies as the figure below shows.



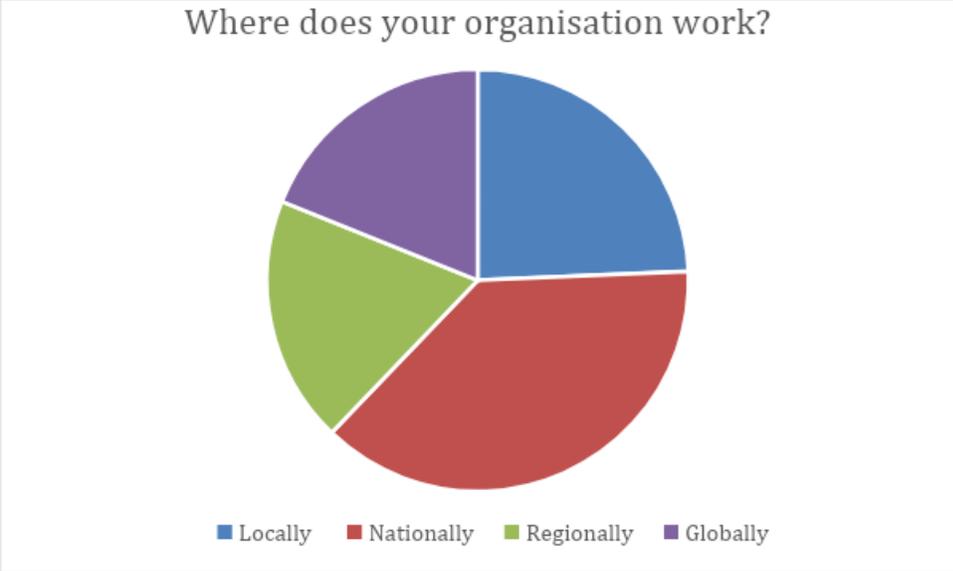
ALT TEXT: Graph shows title: "What is your relationship to RESURJ? Numbers show: 0 folks said donor, 3 folks said close allies or collaborators, 9 folks said participant in a convening, 2 folks said former member or former advisor, 2 folks said advisor, 6 folks said friends of RESURJ, 6 folks said member.

Of the respondents, ten were based in Latin America & the Caribbean, ten were based in sub-Saharan Africa and two were based in the Middle East and North Africa region.

Of the respondents, 20 identified as female and one as gender non-conforming. The majority of respondents, 11 identified as heterosexual, 3 identified as queer, 1 as lesbian and 2 as bisexual (three preferred not to say). Only two respondents identified as having a disability.

Of these respondents, 22 worked for an organisation. Of these organisations 20 were NGOs, 2 were networks and 2 were 'other' (the latter did not work for organisations). Of these respondents working for organisations, 20 of the organisations were formally registered in the country in which they worked.

The majority of the organisations worked nationally:



ALT TEXT: Graph shows title: Where does your organization work? Pie chart shows most respondents answered Nationally, and then Locally, Regionally and Globally in the same size.

The areas of work were diverse and wide-range although the majority of organisations working on SRJ, women’s rights and sexual and gender based violence.



ALT TEXT: Bar graph shows title: What is your area of work/activism? Categories in the bottom of the graph. Results are shared in the next paragraphs.

18 in-depth **interviews** were conducted with RESURJ members, former members, and previous participants of RESURJ convenings, from 18 countries in **four** different regions. In order to ensure respondents and interviewees could speak freely and openly this report has been anonymised. However, the respondents from the survey and the interviewees represented the following regions: South West Asia and North Africa, Sub-saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

There were some challenges to this approach. It is difficult, for example, to review a convening that happened several years ago and some participants mentioned they couldn't remember specifics of some of the sessions. In addition, the different types of convenings including dialogues, retreats, thematic meetings, 'the spaces' organized were considered quite different in terms of purpose and process so it is not possible to compare the convenings themselves, but this report has instead sought to compare the outputs of the convenings as a whole, although there are important distinctions.

The respondents also ranged between members and non-members (the latter having different levels of involvement with RESURJ before and after the dialogue they attended). It was challenging for newer members to comment on the retreats if they had only attended one retreat and as a new member this was a very different experience from the more seasoned members. However, this also provided some interesting insights.

A further issue is the shrinking of civic space and the resulting threat to movement-building for many of the organisations and individual activists that make up the RESURJ community. This issue means that the data collected is limited by the real and perceived security threats, risks and vulnerabilities being experienced by individuals and organisations. As a result, some individuals might not feel comfortable to specify their sexual orientation and gender identity, for example.

This review is interspersed with extracts from the literature review, which contribute to deeper thinking and analysis about the broader feminist movements. The consultant was able to triangulate the findings from the surveys with reports and individual interviews, which sought to make the data more robust.

The review recognises the limitations of the approach and the hope that in future this process could be undertaken on a more regular basis and ensure as many voices and opinions are involved in the process. This is developed further in recommendations.

However, based on the data and the literature review, the consultant was able to make recommendations that will support RESURJ's ongoing commitment to improving future convenings for younger feminist organising and practice.

Section 3:

What did we find out? Key highlights.

The key highlights are presented below, however, RESURJ also used this opportunity to reflect on how the highlights link to the goals and outcomes. The highlights show that RESURJ has been working in line with their overarching goals. RESURJ is recognised and affirmed as creating critical spaces for south younger feminists to strengthen their skills, but also 'equip' them for the challenge of working in sexual reproductive justice in their own countries. The findings emphasise the important role that RESURJ plays as a convenor, co-convenor and facilitator of cross-regional and cross-movements dialogues, debates and shared learning. However, there were also important learnings from the findings about the need to continue strengthening and building on the achievements under these goals in order to develop linkages to other thematic areas and movements, for example, to deepen the work of RESURJ.

RESURJ's overarching goals for 2015 – 2020	Key highlights supporting RESURJ's short-term outcomes	Key highlights supporting RESURJ's intermediate outcomes	Key highlights supporting RESURJ's long-term outcomes
<p>1. Strengthen and enhance the voices and actions of south younger feminists for sexual and reproductive rights and health (SRHR) and gender equality</p>	<p>Nurturing and supporting</p> <p>Finding each other</p> <p>Ownership and voice</p> <p>Documenting the collective narrative</p> <p>Power relations</p> <p>Diversity and inclusivity</p>	<p>Keeping it going</p> <p>Turning reflections into actions</p> <p>Shifting the conversation, Changing the language</p> <p>Diversity and inclusivity</p>	<p>Convenings...and beyond</p> <p>Maintaining momentum</p> <p>Diversity and inclusivity</p>

<p>2. Strengthen the advocacy capacity of RESURJ alliance members, their organizations and allies to effectively mobilize for policies and programs grounded in human rights</p>	<p>Freedom of the space for dialogue</p> <p>Diversity and inclusivity</p> <p>Power relations</p> <p>From self to collective</p>	<p>Turning reflections into actions</p> <p>Power relations</p> <p>Shifting the conversation and Changing language</p>	<p>Keeping it going</p> <p>Maintaining momentum</p> <p>Addressing power relations</p>
<p>3. Invest in developing collective action strategies and knowledge with environmental, social and economic justice advocates and movements, and exploring conceptual inter-linkages and strategic alliances across these issues</p>	<p>Finding each other</p> <p>Turning reflections into actions</p> <p>Keeping it going</p> <p>Diversity and inclusivity</p>	<p>Shifting the conversation, Changing the language</p> <p>Thought leadership</p>	<p>Contributing to sustaining the feminist movement</p> <p>Maintaining momentum</p> <p>Documenting the collective narrative</p>

<p>4. Facilitate and encourage cross-regional and cross-movement dialogues and exchange of expertise related to sexuality, bodily autonomy, elimination of gender-based violence and SRHR violations.</p>	<p>RESURJ as a connector and facilitator</p> <p>Finding each other</p> <p>Documenting the collective narrative</p> <p>Diversity and inclusivity</p>	<p>Thought leadership</p> <p>Shifting the conversation, Changing the language</p>	<p>Contributing to sustaining the feminist movement</p> <p>Turning reflections into actions</p>
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RESURJ as a convener and a co-convener

RESURJ's role in the movement is both as convener, often initiating thematic dialogues to support its Action Agenda; and co-convener which conveys RESURJ's roots in collective action and collaboration with like-minded accomplices, in particular in supporting young feminists participation in advocacy spaces.

RESURJ as a connector and facilitator

'The approach was very inclusive – it was not just a meeting – it was a space where people could speak out and say what they thought.'

Overall, respondents were very positive about the different types of convenings organized by RESURJ. Many participants highlighted the learning and reflexive nature of the RESURJ convenings. This was identified as a key benefit of attending the convenings. There was also a lot of emphasis placed on the importance of being able to connect with feminist activists. As one participant commented, 'it was a good platform to connect individual activists who are doing important work in different locations, but we are not necessarily talking to each other'.

There are strong examples of the emergence of other feminist formations as a result of RESURJ convenings that play a critical role in offering ongoing support and solidarity:

Vecinas Feministas: 'After a dialogue we felt that we wanted to continue the conversation as participants. We didn't want to be a network, we were neighbours with shared values. There

was a consolidated group and we decided to have a deeper dialogue. The process was very organic and took many years, but no one felt pressure to be friends with anyone – we ended up with a set core group – it is amazing how much energy we have – we meet every two or three years, but we are constantly working together. Connection is the care for each other, having confidentiality, the power dynamics made us cry at every meeting, it was very intense, but we were able to come back to this group and feel that we were safe. We had a strategy to come back to – we supported each other and had each other's backs'.

Nurturing and supporting:

'it was helpful for me to shape the work that I am doing and shape also the activism I want to do'

Respondents highlighted the fact that RESURJ convenings create opportunities to strengthen existing work at national level. Many respondents felt that the RESURJ convenings recognized and affirmed the knowledge of younger feminists and created opportunities to have 'substantive conversations'. The majority of respondents ranked the convening as very useful. Respondents felt that their capacity was strengthened the most in the following areas of work: (1) sexual and reproductive justice; (2) Intersectionality and younger feminist leadership; (3) wellbeing and wellness.

From self to collective:

'there is a lot of learning in the space – I do appreciate learning from people's experiences as supposed to people's theories'

RESURJ's approach to strengthening the sense of collective care was critical to the exercise of self-care, which reinforced the sense of shared ownership, which was important to many of the participants. Interviewees felt more aware and 'conscious' of issues such as self and collective care as an important feminist theme as a result of RESURJ convenings. Respondents also commented on the sense of shared and collective responsibility for the space.

Ownership and voice:

'the approach (of RESURJ) encourages collective ownership of the space – an approach that I loved because it expects responsibility from all participants...it is a space where you can collectively push and shift the conversation – it leaves space for that.'

In ranking the convenings, the majority of survey respondents strongly agreed that the convening created an opportunity for them to have a voice. The majority of survey respondents also felt the convenings responded to their needs as participants. One respondent commented on how the convenings 'valued' the knowledge of younger feminists. One of the unique features of the RESURJ convenings is the emphasis on Global South and younger feminist-led. This was critical for many respondents because many spaces that they participated in were not Global South and younger feminist-led.

The freedom of the space:

‘Knowing that you can have time for yourself and you can breathe’

Some respondents commented that the convenings had ‘equipped’ them to face the constant backlash in their own countries in working on sexual reproductive justice. The convenings also allowed participants to engage in their own way, on their own terms, as one participant said, ‘I felt free to take a different role – as a listener. This was an active choice and the space allowed that participant to take on that role’.

Thought leadership:

‘it was helpful for me to shape the work that I want to do and shape also the activism I want to do’

Many respondents highlighted the ‘learning’ from the RESURJ spaces. This learning ranged from thematic learning to gaining insight from the experience of other participants. However, thought leadership and challenging and deepening critical thinking was particularly highlighted for the thematic convenings, ‘one of the most important issues that I learned from RESURJ was about linkages between SRJ and other issues’. As a result of these discussions during RESURJ convenings, this respondent was invited to several meetings, ‘on climate justice, gender justice as well and engaging with a lot of different platforms in Africa’.

Contributing to sustaining the feminist movement:

Importantly, many interviewees commented that participating in RESURJ convenings had strengthened their work, which had resulted in ‘increased visibility of my work and attracting funding for our work’. However, former members who had transitioned out of the RESURJ spaces and were no longer members continued to feel the impact of the convenings. Another indicator is the extent to which activists themselves considered their participation as a benefit to the wider movement. Many participants commented that attending the convening was beneficial or extremely beneficial. Similarly, the majority of respondents identified the sessions at the convenings as being beneficial or extremely beneficial to their group of feminists with whom they work.

This was substantiated in the interviews in which the feedback took various forms from being able to articulate one’s work differently and more confidently after the convening ‘I was able to break my fears around the works that I was already doing....I thought it was just about human rights that’s all, but actually it was a lot more about justice about equality, freedom and human beings....I was able to break the walls I had around my work’ to taking a different approach, ‘I think all the decisions from that meeting (convening) all those things inspired me to strengthen and also deepen my actions at the very grassroots’.

Another key indicator of the contribution to the feminist movement is the extent to which it has contributed at a country/local level to new ideas or new approaches and methodologies. In the survey the majority of respondents agreed that to some extent or a large extent attending the convening had influenced the way they work in their organisation.

It is interesting to note that throughout the material – the reports, survey and interviews – there was a strong expression of action. The reflections from some evaluations conducted after convenings over the years, for example the LAC Regional Dialogue in Chile in 2014, participants planned to share the new knowledge and the critique widely. In the Cross-regional Dialogue in Kuala Lumpur, noted an intention to ‘focus more on understanding and unpacking other terms and introducing them into our work’.

Shifting the conversation, Changing the language:

‘one of the important shifts has been towards justice – to talk about sexual reproductive justice’

Many interviewees commented on the shift in their work and activism as a result of their involvement with other activists in the RESURJ convenings. As one interviewee commented, ‘having a justice lens in a lot of the work I do is really critical and really important’. One interviewee explained further that participating in the convenings meant ‘I was able to break my fears around the works that I was already doing. I was able to break the walls I had around my work’, which gave the respondent and the work a new ‘energy and power’.

The links between thought leadership and changing the language to shift the conversation was highlighted. One respondent gave an example of the convening on criminalisation as being the most significant for their work explaining, ‘During the thematic convenings there is really an opportunity to go into depth...to be honest...that is the one meeting (on criminalisation) that stayed with me, it was new content, it was something I had not considered in my work...it really allowed us to learn a lot ...we tend to think about criminalisation in terms of other people’s behaviour. So for example, criminalising sex work or criminalising drug users...we have always looked at it from that angle. But asking the question - is criminalisation changing the rates of GBV and is that actually working? This was something that really challenged my thinking. Criminalisation is ‘wilful transmission of HIV’ and this was something that I had never thought about - the consequences of that approach. This is the one convening that I got the most out of in my time at RESURJ. I went back and reflected on my work and the way we had been working and started to rethink our approach’.

Finding each other:

‘If we don’t get to participate in the convenings then we would just be talking to ourselves.’

The survey asked one critical question – to what extent did attending the convening make you feel less isolated in your activism? This question always requires deeper reflection and analysis, but it is interesting to note that the majority of participants responded, ‘to some extent’ or ‘to a large extent’. Interviewees also talked about the importance of ‘connecting’ with other activists. . and particularly the importance of identifying allies in their regions. In recommendations for future convenings at national level, the inclusion of more feminists and activists from their region was emphasized. However, one respondent commented that there needed to be more inclusion of feminists and activists from the MENA region noting, ‘I feel there can be more efforts to bring together feminists from MENA’.

This is a very significant finding in terms of creating solidarity and space for a sense of belonging to a collective. It would be interesting and powerful to dig deeper on this question to highlight the importance of ensuring feminists feel less isolated and how this can, in turn, support more sustained activism.

Keeping it going:

'these convenings are not a one-off – it is the consistency – I don't think the person that I have become and the level of understanding I have now– that would not have happened if I didn't have the sustained, collective – sustained activities to participate over time and grow.

Respondents felt very strongly that the consistent engagement with RESURJ was critical for 'growth', but also nurturing and maintaining 'connections with each other'.

Convenings...and beyond:

'Connection is the care for each other, having confidentiality, the power dynamics made us cry at every meeting, it was very intense, but we were able to come back to this group and feel that we were safe'.

One key issue highlighted by some respondents was the emergence of connections and 'networks' beyond the RESURJ space. Vecinas Feministas and the younger African Feminists Dialogues are examples of networks that emerged as a result of the RESURJ dialogues. One respondent talked about the 'organic process' that took many years to establish this core group beyond the RESURJ space.

Turning reflections into actions:

There was an honesty about the fact that there had been challenges and that, particularly for the retreats and dialogues, there was a need to move away from the action planning to have more organic conversations and be more responsive to the needs of participants. However, as one respondent commented, 'the participatory approach allowed us to shape the space'. Another participant commented that the retreats, particularly, were evolving and shifting over time, 'The idea is that we are getting closer to that idea that it should be...a space for community care for self-care...it's both a thinking space and also a planning space'. The retreats reflect how the individuals involved have shaped the retreats which have 'evolved as members have evolved and it has also shaped how we have brought in new members'.

Maintaining momentum:

There was feedback from non-members about the limited follow-up after attending a convening. Four respondents in the survey rated the communication before the convenings between no communication and poor communication. All these 4 respondents were non-members. There were also three comments from non-members in interviews that the follow-up was limited and one respondent noted that 'the silence was too loud' after the dialogue. As the follow-up was lacking it also meant that some of 'momentum was lost'.

Documenting the collective narrative:

One of the key components of RESURJ's approach is that it is participatory and it is difficult to document participatory processes in all their richness. This poses a serious challenge for feminist movement-building as it is necessary and urgent to collate data of the importance of participatory, sustained, intersectional and consistent processes. It is necessary to consider a wide variety of tools and approaches to document these critical and important processes. One recommendation from a participant was clear: 'we produce reports and convenings, but it's not widely shared – what are the key issues coming from these convenings that we engage in'. The importance of this dissemination was linked to the need to increase the visibility and necessity of the work that RESURJ is undertaking.

The issue of documentation was also mentioned in terms of handover and changing of members and membership, 'another weak point is that many of us have transitioned out, but there isn't a formal process for handover – there is a loss in that area'.

Power relations

Power dynamics exist in all spaces, but many respondents were very clear about the need to understand and interrogate power in RESURJ spaces, highlighting the exclusion that younger South feminists face in their daily lives and work.

As a fluid and evolving network, there have been transitions of members within RESURJ. Some participants commented on power relations between longer-serving members of RESURJ and newer members of RESURJ. One respondent commented, 'In the history of RESURJ there have been many different retreats with many different kinds of experiences depending on who was in the room and power relations'.

The power dynamic is also in having a shared history that is not fully extended to new members (even if unintentional). One respondent strongly recommended developing ways of 'handing over' as a member transitions out of RESURJ so that the memories, ideas and contributions are never lost. However, this can also support the orientation of newer members to ensure they feel included.

Diversity and inclusivity:

It is difficult to establish from the online survey and the interviews conducted the extent to which the space was inclusive and diverse. However, it is important to note that disability rights – majority of survey respondents (23/24) identified as women, one identified as gender non-conforming. the majority of respondents identified as heterosexual although 1 identified as lesbian, 2 identified as queer and 2 identified as bi-sexual of 24 respondents. The majority of respondents that gave details of the leadership of their organization mentioned 'younger women', 'majority cis-women' and heterosexual women. Only two respondents identified as having a disability.

However, with those statistics in mind, the majority of participants rated the space 'inclusive' (7/24) and then 5 of 21 rated it extremely inclusive. A number of respondents skipped this question. One participant commented, the convenings were inclusive, but sometimes can include the same people, and not to reach to people who are usually not invited or included in international spaces'. However, two participants noted the need to 'improve RESURJ's membership and supported feminists in terms of inclusivity of diverse people from diverse backgrounds' and 'deliberately looking for members of LGBTQI community to be part of the convenings/collective'. One recommendation was to connect 'with national and regional platforms/networks to refer members from the marginalized communities'.

Section 4:

Recommendations:

Shorter-term in the context of COVID-19:

A. Developing data and analysis:

There is a serious lack of data on the impact of the pandemic on many communities, populations and individuals. As the earlier analysis highlighted, there is a serious dearth of data on the true impact of the pandemic on women's rights including sexual reproductive health rights.

Overall recommendation: Strengthen RESURJ's role as a thought leader on the impact of Covid-19 on SRJ, feminist convenings, younger South feminist organising and movement building and linkages between SRJ and other key emerging impacts of Covid-19.

- Inform the response to Covid-19: Map possible opportunities to develop thought papers, briefings or research on intersections between SRJ and key emerging issues post-Covid. For example, the impact of food insecurity on sexual reproductive justice, the impact of further shrinking civic space/increased police powers for organisations mobilising around SRJ.

B. Engage with donors for flexibility and adaptability:

Overall recommendation: To explore new ways of supporting RESURJ members in their work

- It is necessary to reconsider how we support each other not necessarily to change the approach, but also to strengthen what has worked during Covid.
- Develop a strategy for short-term and longer term responses to the pandemic and support to members. As the convenings have not been possible in 2020 then it is important to consider how to re-allocate those unused resources. It is recommended that resources are reallocated rather than for convenings to be postponed.
- RESURJ might need to develop new processes and procedures to allow for reallocation of resources. This does not mean that RESURJ is becoming a grant maker, but that RESURJ is responding to the existing challenges that many young feminist led organisations are facing.
- It is important to consider what to fund and support at this time. Consider supporting activities by members that are otherwise not funded and accessing funds to implement

an activity that might normally not be possible. In light of the current challenges enable members to use resources to build evidence of advocacy, conduct rapid assessments of the impact of government policies and increased police powers, support research into food insecurity and SRJ etc.

C. Understanding the digital spaces:

The impact of the Covid pandemic has raised a number of questions about how RESURJ can work effectively with online spaces. It is important to reflect on the following questions: what are the new barriers for members and non-members to engage in RESURJ online spaces? How exclusionary are online spaces? How can RESURJ effectively do advocacy online? What are the new barriers to participation? To what extent does the diminishing access to government and international spaces reduce the impact of SRJ advocacy? How can this be addressed?

- Consider collaborating with another feminist organisation to conduct an assessment or mapping of what online spaces look like for younger feminists and how these can be strengthened. What challenges have RESURJ members faced during this time? What does wellness and wellbeing look like online?
- Explore new and existing relationships with digital influencers. Consider how can RESURJ connect with influencers to work towards collective action, mobilisation, solidarity etc.? Draw on the knowledge and expertise within the RESURJ membership to lead these discussions and reflections.

D. Be an influencer for longer-term development:

It is important for RESURJ to hold on to the findings in this assessment and continue to strengthen existing work, networks, alliances and connections. These remain more critical than ever before. It is also important to encourage and support donors to continue thinking longer term and holistically about a more comprehensive recovery to the pandemic that transforms the existing structural inequalities that resulted in such a devastating impact on many countries in the Global South.

In the longer term....

A. Diversity and Inclusivity:

There were several comments about inclusion and broadening the space. It is important to emphasise that this isn't about diversity for the sake of diversity leading to tokenism, but rather creating more opportunities to diversify the conversations. One participant suggested, 'engage more with movements not so much with the usual suspects in official spaces'. The latter suggestions are interesting although challenging, but the comment about 'usual suspects' is a common challenge within feminist spaces. The membership can support with power analyses at local level of the actors and how to reach the most marginalized and excluded. However, the latter might not be part of organisations or the organisations, in the case of many sex worker organisations, for example, might be unregistered.

Overall recommendation: Further explore alliances and connections with other movements and collectives that would enrich and deepen the RESURJ approach to convenings

- ❑ Power mapping: prior to the convening, explore the power map with participants including members and non-members (this could be done as part of the survey or a webinar) - who gets left out/marginalised/excluded (in their country)? This might be an opportunity for attendees to explore the power they have, the access they have, the privilege (it might be limited) they have. This is also an opportunity for members to be aware of the dynamics prior to the convenings.
- ❑ Based on the power mapping for the application process to attend dialogues RESURJ members can specifically invite or encourage individuals to apply to attend or support applications for their attendance. This can include prioritizing support for unregistered collectives or cooperatives to apply, identifying organisations and activists in other movements (for example, environmental human rights defenders, disability rights defenders, sex worker movements etc.)
- ❑ Conduct a mapping of the thematic gaps in RESURJ convenings, for example, SRJ for people living with disabilities.
- ❑ Identify movements and collectives that are working specifically on those thematic issues for learning exchanges or to ensure inclusion in the RESURJ convenings.
- ❑ Consider conducting a thematic dialogue to include other movements and collectives, for example, a thematic dialogue on sexual reproductive justice with people living with disabilities.

B: Safety and Security:

There was little discussion about contestation and disagreement in the interviews and even in the few examples, there was little evidence of participants feeling unsafe. Most respondents did not mention the emergence of conflict about key feminist principles and values and it is interesting to note as this does not seem to reflect the divisions and contestations within the feminist space locally, regionally and internationally¹⁵. However, reflections on safety and security are integral to the convenings. As the Roestone Collective highlights, 'a safe space is never completely safe. Even so, we encourage the critical cultivation of safe space as a site for negotiating differences and challenging oppression. Use this recognition to encourage participants in safe spaces to be more reflexive about what and who they seek safety *from* and safety *for*' (my italics).

Overall recommendation: To formalise the processes for safety and security and use reflexive tools to ensure it is participatory during the convenings

- ❑ Develop a Safety and Security strategy for all convenings.

¹⁵ Roy, S. (ed.) (2012) *New South Asian feminisms: Paradoxes and Possibilities*, Zed Books

- ❑ Members to conduct a safety and security analysis of the context in which the convening will be conducted
- ❑ Safety and security analysis to be shared with all participants attending the convening. Participants could be asked to provide input of any safety and security concerns they have on returning to their countries after attending a convening (this might be particularly important for convenings taking place in parallel to high level public intergovernmental meetings).
- ❑ At the start of the convenings create an opportunity to reflect on these questions of what participants might be seeking safety *from* and safety *for*. Consider ways in which this can be documented and displayed (anonymously if desired) during the whole convening so that reflexive approach can continue.
- ❑ Based on the analysis a 'response group' would need to be established by the organisers to respond to any problems or security threats emerging before, during or after the convening. Establish a safety and security focal point for the duration of the convening.

C. Follow-up with non-members and maintaining momentum:

In terms of maintaining momentum this is also an issue to consider during the convenings. RESURJ's approach considers collective responsibility so RESURJ could consider a deeper conversation about collective responsibility to maintain the momentum. One participant commented that there was a lack of clarity about the role played by the members in terms of following-up and supporting networks that had been established following the convening.

- ❑ Participatory agenda setting and co-design: following the online survey, RESURJ can share the findings of the survey and the agenda developed based on the survey so that the process is transparent and accountable. Many respondents emphasised the importance of RESURJ's participatory approach during the convenings so this can be reinforced before the convenings.
- ❑ Involvement of non-members well in advance of the convening to agree content and process for the convenings. This could be an informal online survey shared by members to identify key content issues and the use of facilitators, but also affirm RESURJ's commitment to safety and security and wellness by checking-in about the needs of all participants.
- ❑ Involvement of non-members in evaluation of convenings: conduct an immediate 'check-in' at the end of each day of the convening. Consider using creative forms of documenting how participants are feeling throughout the convenings (artivism, audio interviews, blogs, feelings wall, learning wall etc.) and this can be consolidated and included in the minutes and reports from each convening. This material can also be posted online to celebrate the engagement during the convenings.
- ❑ Post-convening follow-up: this was highlighted as a key area for improvement. A follow-up online survey can be conducted and the results consolidated and attached to the report. It is also worth considering a more intensive engagement with some individual participants from the convenings (see under Documentation).

- ❑ Ongoing engagement with non-members: many respondents wanted some additional follow-up and more opportunities to engage with RESURJ. Members could organize webinars with non-members in their countries or regions to continue the conversation on particular topics.
- ❑ Evaluations and reviews: Ensure that members and non-members are involved in any evaluations and reviews. If possible ensure that members who have transitioned out of the RESURJ space are also able to participate in the evaluation to provide some 'institutional knowledge'.

D. Documenting the power of these convenings:

There were a number of comments that the RESURJ space was free and open, but not informal – there were processes of intense learning and critical thinking. Overall, participants valued this approach. However, RESURJ needs to consider formalizing some aspects of the process further to document these substantive conversations in a way that means participants can still access and use the materials. The processes do not need to be rigid, but formally agreed with clear lines of responsibility.

Overall recommendation: To formalise the 'what' of documentation so that it is consistent throughout all the convenings. How the learnings are documented can be flexible as long as the final product is consistent and captures all the necessary and relevant information.

- Develop guidelines for documentation –
 - ◆ the purpose of documentation,
 - ◆ does each convening require a different type of documentation,
 - ◆ what needs to be documented,
 - ◆ critical questions and necessary information,
 - ◆ what will be the format for documenting (agree a template for reports etc.).
- Enjoy exploring the 'how': it doesn't matter how the convenings are documented as long as the relevant and critical learnings, reflections, ideas and plans are captured. If a standard template for reporting is developed then it makes it easier to monitor the impact of the convenings at a glance.
- Don't lose the collective/shared narrative: although one respondent noted that 'the future is more important than the past', another respondent commented that 'that many of us have transitioned, but out there isn't a formal process for handover – there is a loss in that area.'

E. Build an evidence base:

A critical purpose of documentation is to build an evidence base both from how we convene and for what we convene. This evidence base is critical to mobilise resources to continue organising

these convenings. However, evidence can also be used by members and non-members for lobbying and advocacy, programme development or for the sustainability of their work. In line with RESURJ's collective approach, these resources are collectively developed and owned by the participants of each convening. This documentation is also an important recognition of the contribution made by all participants. Under this recommendation, a system of evaluating each convening could be established.

Overall recommendation: RESURJ needs to identify a key framework and tools for monitoring, evaluation and learning that can be applied over a prolonged period of time to build a compelling evidence base for the importance and value of convenings.

- ❑ RESURJ should identify one or two members and non-members per region and focus on **evaluating the impact of the convenings in their work**. The evaluation can consider: 1) relationships formed and sustained from the convenings; 2) joint activities undertaken after the convening; 3) sharing and disseminating of information from the convening to other feminists/WROs/HROs; 4) the individual empowerment and how that impacts the effectiveness and sustainability of their work
- ❑ **Academies for longer term learning:** One participant mentioned hosting 'an academy – deliberate spaces – spaces that bring people together for collective learning' over longer periods of time and linking this to some form of mentorship. There are models for learning academies such as the sex worker academy in Kenya and the 'Looking In, Looking Out' programme run by Positive Vibes that offers an ongoing programme of leadership and mentorship for LGBTQI leaders.
- ❑ **Academies/'Learning laboratories'**¹⁶: RESURJ could consider supporting regional or local learning laboratories to share, strengthen networks and solidarity around promising practice. The learning laboratories or spaces could be used by RESURJ to measure long-term change.
- ❑ **Linking into academic research:** more ethnographic and exploratory M&E (as above and more) can be conducted in partnership with academic researchers who are funded by government research grants. RESURJ could develop a relationship with a number of universities (preferably in the Global South) to support an ongoing evaluation of the impact of the convenings. This is an opportunity to monitor and demonstrate transformational impact.

¹⁶ This is an idea proposed by Lori Heise to increase learning around VAWG programming

Section 5:

Conclusion

This review highlights the continuing and growing need for opportunities for activists to connect. The findings reflect the important role that RESURJ plays as convenor, facilitator, connector and thought leader. There is extensive evidence that the convenings organised by RESURJ members play a critical role in bringing younger South feminist activists together in solidarity. In some examples, Vecinas Feministas and YAFD, the connections have continued beyond the convenings. Some activists discussed the significant impact that the convenings had on the way their work, whilst others highlighted the support offered by other activists at the convenings.

However, as evidence of the engagement and investment in the role of RESURJ, there were also ideas and suggestions for how to move forward.

Shared learning: this review has demonstrated clear strengths in RESURJ's approach to convenings. RESURJ needs to document and celebrate the approach being taken in creating such critical spaces for younger feminist activists to converge around sexual reproductive justice struggles. Some respondents talked about this approach shifting their thinking and their work so there is much more to capture!

Creating linkages with donors and other allies: The respondents appreciated 'the space' and the critical opportunities that RESURJ has created for them to participate in a wide range of platforms. However, the issue of resources and funding did emerge. Funding is an ongoing challenge for feminist organisations and movements and RESURJ could use the convenings to further bridge the gap between activists and donors as well as further influence the agendas of donors on funding for SRJ.

Unexpected outcomes: Respondents commented on gaining knowledge and skills in areas such as monitoring and evaluation, which was not necessarily the objective of the RESURJ dialogues. However, it is a good indicator that participants are taking away skills and knowledge that might be unexpected or unplanned. If RESURJ develops a consistent approach to monitoring and evaluation then it will be possible to capture and strengthen these unexpected outcomes.

The review recognises the limitations of the approach and the hope that in future this process could be undertaken on a more regular basis and ensure as many voices and opinions are involved in the process.

However, this was an important process for RESURJ to undertake and provided key learnings and an important opportunity for members, allies and friends to share constructive criticism and ideas for how RESURJ can build on and strengthen the convenings.

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- [1] <https://www.forbes.com/sites/pascaledavies/2020/03/29/coronavirus-infects-europe-with-more-divisions-and-nationalist-spirit/#1143908f551e>
- [2] <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/11/europes-marginalised-roma-people-hit-hard-by-coronavirus>
- [3] <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/17/israel-returns-to-partial-lockdown-with-immediate-weekend-shutdown>
- [4] <https://africasacountry.com/2020/03/homesick-notes-on-lockdown>
- [5] Ibid

- [6] <https://thecorrespondent.com/378/why-social-distancing-wont-work-for-us/50039243100-5409cfb5>
- [7] <https://oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/how-to-stop-coronavirus-lockdown-leading-to-an-upsurge-in-violence-against-women%E2%80%A2%BF/> and <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/mar/28/lockdowns-world-rise-domestic-violence> and <https://time.com/5812990/france-domestic-violence-hotel-coronavirus>
- [8] <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/global-economic-prospects>
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