

Reaching Out

FÒS FEMINISTA

International Alliance
for Sexual and Reproductive
Health, Rights, and Justice



The Dobbs Decision: Threatening Reproductive Health Around the World

The U.S. Supreme Court's reversal of Roe v. Wade is impacting sexual and reproductive health around the world.

Earlier this year, Fòs Feminista and our partners conducted research to document the impact of the Supreme Court decision on abortion laws, policies, narratives, and movements in four countries where we work.

We conducted nearly 70 interviews with government officials, abortion service providers, representatives of sexual and reproductive health organizations, researchers and journalists in Colombia, India, Kenya, and Nigeria.

The findings are disturbing. As we expected, the Dobbs decision is being used by opposition groups to bolster anti-choice movements and discredit providers and organizations working to advance reproductive health.

In Kenya, recent legal wins to affirm abortion rights in the constitution were thwarted when opposition groups successfully used the Dobbs ruling to persuade the Court of Appeals to stay those new rights. One person we interviewed explained that anti-rights groups in Kenya were excited because they believed that the U.S. overturning *Roe v. Wade* would make their efforts a “walk in the park.”

Lagos, Nigeria's largest city, released new guidelines for healthcare professionals on how to provide safe abortions. Emboldened by the Dobbs decision, anti-abortion actors quickly mobilized. And just nine days after the guidelines were launched, they were suspended by the government. The Catholic Bishop of Oyo stated, “The striking down of the 50-year-old

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From the Desk of Giselle

Earlier this year, I visited two of our long-time partner organizations, CEPEP in Paraguay and CIES in Bolivia. Here's how your support is helping us take the road less traveled.

Delivering Critical Care in Paraguay

Paraguay has the highest adolescent pregnancy rate in Latin America. We know that providing access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, including contraception, is one of the best ways to reverse this trend. The problem, however, is that there is a severe shortage of these services in Indigenous and other rural communities.

In 2022, our partner, CEPEP, launched a mobile health unit to provide critical healthcare services to communities across the Alto Paraná region, where there is a severe shortage of healthcare workers. The mobile team goes to great lengths to reach these rural communities—even by motorcycle. They work with community leaders and alongside local midwives, exchanging expertise to deliver gynecological care, contraception, and even dental care and clothing. During my visit, I joined our mobile team and was honored to witness a teenage mom get contraception for the first time in her life.

CEPEP developed this successful approach through Fòs Feminista's Innovation and Social Enterprise Lab, which helps alliance partners develop and test sexual

and reproductive healthcare business models. Once a sustainable model was achieved, CEPEP applied for low-interest loans from our Feminist Impact Fund, which allowed them to purchase equipment and build to expand its busiest clinic.

Empowering Teens in Bolivia

I also traveled to Bolivia to meet with our partners at CIES, where they are also addressing a national adolescent pregnancy crisis. With 88 births for every 1,000 young people between the ages of 15 and 19, Bolivia's teen pregnancy rate is nearly twice as high as the average for the rest of the world. Indigenous and Afro-Bolivian women are more likely to have unwanted pregnancies and to be subjected to forced marriages or unions.

Despite these startling numbers, most young Bolivians don't have access to any formal education, much less to sexuality education. CIES is stepping in, providing comprehensive sexuality education in schools and other educational spaces, training healthcare professionals, and providing sexual and reproductive healthcare to some of the most disadvantaged groups. Thanks in great part to your support, CIES' training has empowered 535,000 young people.

With the collaboration of our alliance, Fòs Feminista is transforming lives. I am incredibly grateful for your trust in our partners to deliver the best solutions for their local communities—and for your continued investment in their success.

Tax-Wise Gifts to Make in 2023

Did you know that there are gifts you can make to Fòs Feminista that provide tax benefits in return?

Qualified Charitable Distributions from Your IRA: If you are at least 70 ½ years old, you can make a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) from your IRA directly to Fòs Feminista. The amount you transfer will not count as income for the year, and you will avoid paying income taxes on the amount donated.

Grant from Your Donor-Advised Fund: If you have a donor-advised fund, please consider a grant that helps women! To extend your impact and support Fòs Feminista all year long, you can recommend a recurring gift.

Gifts of Stock: A gift of stock helps women while reducing your tax burden. To make an outright gift of stock, contact us at (212) 214-0278 or donate@fosfeminista.org for the correct stock transfer directions for your gift. We must receive your gift before December 31 to qualify for the 2023 tax year, so act quickly! If you have questions or would like assistance completing your gift, contact us at (212) 214-0278 or giftplan@fosfeminista.org. Our federal tax ID is 13-1845455.

An Emotional Network: Reflections on Interconnectedness by Fòs Feminista Supporter Timothy Barnes

Gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights are a part of my core beliefs.

I was very influenced by my mother, who was on the Board of the local Planned Parenthood back in the 1950s. We talked very openly about sexual and reproductive health in our household while I was growing up. Because of her, I learned how important it was that people, especially young people, have access to sexual and reproductive information. Our home was a lending library, helping our entire community ease into their sexuality.

That's what I find most powerful about Fòs Feminista—the commitment to equipping young people with tools to thrive in life, helping them define a life of meaning and purpose on their own terms, on their own schedule.

I love Fòs Feminista because they are helping facilitate work at the local level and amplifying the voices of people who have long been left out of the conversation—young people. They recognize that achieving reproductive health and rights is closely tied to reducing poverty and advancing gender equity. Building bridges and fostering trust in everything they do. Following the lead of local community members.

In my opinion, the most powerful tool in the Fòs Feminista toolbox is its ability to foster interconnectedness and invest in young people. In May,



I attended the most recent Fòs Feminista Board meeting in Colombia, where I met and listened

to Sophie from Canada and Kobe from Guyana, two of our younger Board members. Both stand as models of youthful development and leadership.

More than ever, I am convinced that when we include people and make them feel welcome, we create the glue that binds. This bonding is key to combating both nationalism and religious extremism. Connecting cultivates empathy for us as human beings.

As the world continues to change at an ever-quickening pace, our alliance partners must be prepared to respond and adapt. They need tools. Fòs Feminista's work to expand access to sexual and reproductive health provides tools that have never been more needed.

Tim Barnes is the husband of Fòs Feminista Board Chair Pam Barnes and a lifelong advocate for reproductive rights and gender equality. After a career working in finance, Tim became a high school teacher of English and History in Spanish Harlem. Tim and Pam volunteered in the Peace Corps together in Paraguay. He served on the Board of his local Planned Parenthood in the Hudson Valley.

The Dobbs Decision

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'Roe and Wade' [sic] in the U.S. of America has energized the pro-life movement all over the world."

Furthermore, there is growing concern that the Dobbs ruling could unravel essential U.S. funding for foreign sexual and reproductive health (SRH) organizations. Interviewees expressed concern that the decision might impact what organizations can do or say on abortion, much like the Global Gag Rule did. We are calling on the U.S. Biden Administration to protect crucial funding to SRH organizations around the world by issuing clear statements that the Dobbs decision **will not** impact U.S. foreign assistance.

Complete findings of our research and recommendations to safeguard reproductive health and rights will be released in a report later this year. Early findings are clear—the Dobbs decision is already having a negative impact well beyond U.S. borders. Your support of Fòs Feminista makes this type of research possible.

You are helping us in Kenya, where young people facing barriers to reproductive health services are being connected to safe and reliable services through a hotline provided by the Trust for Indigenous Culture and Health (TICAH). Your support helps Causa Justa, which filed and won the lawsuit that decriminalized abortion in Colombia, to advocate for safe abortion services. Your support is fueling all our work across the globe to protect sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Ending Gender-Based Violence

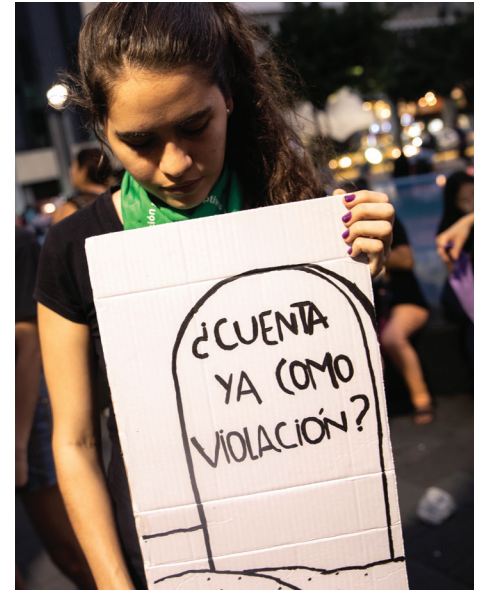
“Sexual violence plagues our daily lives.” That’s how Ana Gabriela Candela-Garzón describes the cycle of violence facing many women and girls in Latin America.

Stopping gender-based violence is a cornerstone of Fòs Feminista’s work. And right now, we are implementing the **Feminist Futures Free from Violence** project. Through this initiative, we are expanding care and counseling services to abuse survivors, building a network of trained professionals to effectively identify and respond to violence, engaging men and boys to challenge gender norms that perpetuate violence against women, and advocating for public policies that eradicate gender-based violence.

Fòs Feminista’s partner, CEPAM-G,

is supporting women and girls in Ecuador to escape and overcome violent situations. When 13-year-old Lucía became withdrawn and depressed after being sexually abused by a family member, her mother Sandra sought help from CEPAM-G. Devastated by the abuse Lucía had endured, Sandra wanted justice for her daughter and to ensure that other young women would be protected from this predator. The CEPAM-G team not only provided Lucía and Sandra with the counseling and care they needed to heal, but they also helped them pursue legal action.

Our **Feminist Futures Free from Violence** project is making progress in Ecuador and throughout Latin America. With you as our partner, we will continue to build a safer and



more equitable world in which women and young people everywhere are free from gender-based violence. When you support Fòs Feminista, you are investing in our alliance of partner organizations who are working together to advocate for bold solutions.

What’s in a Name?

Fòs Feminista embraces our roots in Latin America and the Caribbean as we also expand the reach of our alliance to reach more communities.

“Fòs” is the Haitian Creole word for “strength” and honors the power and significance of the Haitian revolution.

“Feminista” means “feminist” in many countries where we work and emphasizes our clear commitment to sexual and reproductive rights and equality for all.

Our new name reflects the collective resilience and power we are building with your help, and the importance of supporting feminist organizations and movements that are leading transformative change.

Do you have questions or input to share with us? We want to hear from you! Send an email to lalexander@fosfeminista.org or call Lloyd Alexander at 212-214-0278 and let us know how we’re doing.

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