



Youth Advocacy Institute: Workshop Report

Bangkok, Thailand

11th - 12th November 2017



YAI Bangkok

A Brief report

Organized by ASAP

Venue: Chulalongkorn University Hospital, Bangkok, Thailand

Participants: 20 medical students from Mahidol University, Srinakharinwirot University, Rangsit University, RSU, Thammasat University and Chulalongkorn University.

Day 1:

We started the day with opening remarks, expectations and an introduction round. Then we set the rules for the workshop which would help us use our time together to the best extent.

Dr Buniyarit from the Ministry of Public Health also joined and spoke about the law in Thailand and the support that the ministry was providing to ensure safe abortion access and to prevent adolescent pregnancies. He highlighted the multi department approach which ensures that information and services were made available.



After his excellent presentation, we started the day with Manisha Gupte explaining the social construct of gender and the resulting gender power differences.

An important point emphasized was that nature created differences but we create discrimination. We then discussed how we can identify babies as male or female only by looking at their genitals but as the children grow older we can recognize them because we dress boys and girls differently. These create stereotypes of what is masculine and what is feminine. We discussed what kind of toys they get and hence the expectations from their private space and public space interactions.



She helped the participants understand the role of evolving human societies from hunter gatherer to agricultural to industrial and how that has shaped the way gender roles for stereotyped. She then explained how the gender roles and discrimination is the result of a system called patriarchy which ensures that the rule of the father's is maintained and that women remain

controlled. Although woman and man contribute genetically to the baby, only the man's name is given. Although the woman may be the home maker, the house is in the man's name.

She discussed how women end up doing unpaid repetitive and domestic work while men also work hard but in a public space with adult company and where they earn cash.

Manisha gave the participants a brief orientation on human rights and what they stand for. The participants were asked to do a short exercise on understanding the needs based vs the rights based approach.

They then undertook a short group work on defining SRH and RRH. After the discussion we learnt that both are interested linked and cannot be one without the other. Despite that we rarely talk on sexual rights and focus mainly on reproductive.

After lunch RSA had organised a panel discussion which was very lively. A doctor who was practising in the community shared his experiences and real life situations that he has had to deal with.

After this session we had a values clarification session where we discussed certain statements and clarified our position on them.

Then we did the power walk which helped us understand that some people end up having unsafe abortion or unwanted pregnancies because they are disempowered and lack information to services and not because they are inferior or to be blamed. We spoke of the role of the government in ensuring that every citizen irrespective of class and gender and rural urban must have access to basic health information and services. We closed the day with the ASAP animation film.



Day 2:

We started with a recap.

The participants drew the male and female reproductive systems and we discussed the various methods of contraception and how they work in the body.



After this we had the session on abortion methods and discussed why unsafe abortion happens and the advantage and disadvantage of surgical vs medical abortion. We learnt that surgical abortion required trained and skilled surgeon as well as aseptic facilities while the medical abortion only required good quality pills and could be used by the woman at home also.

We saw a segment of the film 'If these walls could talk. The participants were very moved by the plight of the woman in the film and realised that making abortion difficult to obtain will not stop women for terminating an unwanted pregnancy.

They understood that restricting abortion access only increases unsafe abortion and is against women's human rights.

We had a session on understanding hegemony, subversion and being pro- choice.

Some of the feedback received:

I have finally understood that abortion is not illegal in Thailand, just restricted.

I learnt about the differences between gender and sex and if gender is created by society it can also be changed by us.

I understood the idea of equality between both genders.

At the end of this we had a valedictory session, distributed certificates and the workshop came to a close.

Participant List

Waenny Paridchaya Varrie	Mahidol University
Wipapun Serepitakkul	Mahidol University
June Ratnaprasitt	Mahidol University
Noo Arisra	Mahidol University
Wallis Mechuchep	Srinakharinwirot University
Jeannette Wong	Srinakharinwirot University
Pawat Aswanund	Srinakharinwirot University
Suchada Sawarnngam	Srinakharinwirot University
Jarupa Rimpracha	Rangsit University
Kwang Dangluethai	RSU
Ploy Panwad	RSU
Laksika Asirwatwanit	Rangsit University
SMR Mook	Rangsit University
Mint Nikita	Thammasat University
Maneepunanarai Jiwjinda	Thammasat University
England Nintnarumit	Thammasat University
Jirat Sunanwatana	Chulalongkorn University.