Debriefing on Leadership Development Workshop
And 4th IWAC 2019

9th March, 2019
D-YISA, ASAP

After three members of D-YISA, namely Manita Rai, Ugyen Dema and Wangchuk Dema (coordinator) had the opportunity to attend Leadership Competency Development Workshop in Bangkok, Thailand last month from February 17th-19th, it was a delightful moment for us to share our experiences with the rest of the members of the CAN on 9th March. Also, we briefly debriefed the members on the 4th International Congress on Women’s Health and Unsafe Abortion which happened back to back from February 20th – 22nd and was attended by Ugyen Dema and Wangchuk Dema only.

Besides Manita and Ugyen, there were 13 members including 3 new members who joined us today because apparently they heard from their friends that D-YISA takes into consideration and actually discuss issues that many other youth groups do not talk about. Almost all of them are the students of KGUMs. The members present during today’s meeting are as follows:

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<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>College/Job</th>
<th>Contact number</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pema Tashi</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>17480079</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Sonam Choden</td>
<td>Student (KGUMs) 2nd</td>
<td>16911387</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Dechen Phurba</td>
<td>Student (KGUMs) 3rd</td>
<td>17585942</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Sonam Zangmo</td>
<td>Student (KGUMs) 2nd</td>
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Wangchuk Dema requested everyone to do a round of introduction and she briefly explained the objectives of D-YISA as a CAN under ASAP; 1. To start (open) conversations around abortion in the country, 2. To sensitize on the existing conditional laws on abortion in the country as hardly anybody knows about it, and lastly specifically aimed at these medical students, 3. To create awareness that health service providers have a huge and important role in making safe abortion (services) in the country completely legal and available. Then she moved on to the recent Leadership Competency Development Workshop and 4th IWAC in Bangkok. For the former, she handed over to Manita to talk about her learnings and experiences from the Leadership Competency Development Workshop.

Firstly, Manita acknowledged the fact that we (as a CAN and country) has a long way to go in creating a big support system for feminism to be able to thrive in. Then, she took us from Day 1 until Day 3 with key points that made it easier for everybody to understand. She clarified that not
all the leaders are or have to be dominating in nature but that there are different leadership styles that a person has or could adapt to in order to become a leader. If all the team members consists of D style, then it is a D (doomsday or disaster) for the entire CAN although it is not possible. She also mentioned that for a team (CAN) to strengthen or function successfully, we should not only rely on the leader or coordinator but to reflect on ourselves and our leadership style at an individual level. For what a leader lacks in, usually members should complement; for instance, if the leader is an I (influencing) but leaves out details and facts, it would be great if there is someone in the team who is a C (Conscientious). She added that no matter what profile a leader has, they always have to go through four stages of thinking, enabling, inspiring and achieving.

She also talked about setting goals with SMART tool which was also new to many of them. In order to achieve our goals, it is important that we prioritize the activities from our to-do-list when we have too much on our plate. She also showed them the prioritization tool. There was also a mention of the exercises that we did as groups and individually. Lastly, we told the young members that if they are interested, we could do more elaborative form of workshop of 1 day to understand the details of the DISC profiling and to carry out simple exercises to discover their leadership style and they expressed their interest.

Followed by Ugyen, she shared her learnings and experiences from the 4th IWAC. She informed the CAN members that she saw brilliant papers by activists and researchers and learnt that thousands of women worldwide die from complications of unsafe abortions each year. And thousands more suffer from permanent damage to their reproductive health. She also shared one main thing she could get from the entire conference was on self-managed abortions and that women can stay home and perform medical abortions if women have access to abortion pills which is safe as well. Also, how many countries are now using technology such as drones and robots to deliver abortion pills to women in the countries where abortion is illegal.

We also took the opportunity to share information on YAR in May and for now, we kept it open and asked them to nominate themselves or someone else for it and write an expression of interest. If we do not get anyone by tomorrow, the coordinator will nominate 3 by tomorrow evening and send the list to ASAP.

The overall meeting lasted more than 2 hours and although our main agenda for the meeting was to debrief the CAN members on the Leadership Competency Development workshop and the 4th IWAC, we took out some time to sensitize the 3 new members and a sort of reminder to the old members regarding the conditional laws on abortion in the country and why (Safe) abortion should be rights based. Also, the importance of understanding that a woman gets to decide what she wants to do with her bodies, her life and her future – shedecides.

It was interesting how young members shared personal abortion stories of women they know of. Three real stories and each story depicted different side of abortion; 1. The first story was how a high school student got pregnant and crossed borders to get an abortion and luckily, she caught hold of qualified doctor and had a safe abortion. 2. In the second story, a young woman had an
unwanted pregnancy and crossed borders to get an abortion, she had some complication but now is recovering. 3. The last one was about a 16 year old girl who got pregnant but her father forced her to have an abortion across borders and after six months, she died. The common thing among all 3 stories is that people went across borders to get an abortion and that there is big risk attach in doing so; landing an unsafe abortion and dying.

The conclusion that the young members derived was that abortions are happening and that girls and women are dying of unsafe abortions in the country. Overall, all of them look forward to working closely and actively for rest of the year. And lastly, we asked the members to write a learning or two and feedback if they have. So, following are the learnings or self-reflections that the young members of D-YISA had.
Even after they wrote learnings and feedback, we had Yeshey Dorji (new member) send us one more message via email as shown below. It seems that he was very content with our meeting and debriefing.

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**Yeshey Dorji**

to me

Hi Ashim...

Thank you for letting me one of your audience in today’s brief meeting. Personally I found that the aims of this family are crucial. And we need to move forward. The knowledge I got today are so effective and thank you for further insight on abortion.