



# **TABLE OFCONTENTS**



## about ASAP

#### Asia Safe Abortion Partnership

The Asia Safe Abortion Partnership (ASAP) is a regional network of individuals and organisations working for sexual and reproductive health and rights; doctors, nurses and midwives; and lawyers and researchers. It was founded in 2008 to promote women's sexual and reproductive rights and health in Asia by reducing unsafe abortion and by promoting access to comprehensive safe abortion services.

It started with 37 members at the founding meeting and has now grown to include members from South and South East Asia as well as the Middle East and the Pacific. We have active members in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam..

ASAP is a forum for information exchange and joint learning; for strategic thinking and planning; for regional and international advocacy. ASAP also provides capacity building support to its members in the areas of advocacy; research and documentation; and service delivery.

#### ASAP's Small Grants Project

In the past three years, ASAP has conducted Youth Advocacy Institutes in order to build capacity for safe abortion advocacy and strengthen prochoice discourses among young people in Asia. All participants of the Youth Advocacy Institute are invited to submit proposals for short-term projects and the ASAP Steering Committee and staff members select the most promising projects for funding.

Through these small grants ASAP has funded projects in Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Lebanon, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. The grantees are offered constant technical support and feedback from the Secretariat, for the duration of their projects and after its completion. This helps them develop projects that have the potential to shape future advocacy for safe abortion in Asia.

The ASAP Youth Champions also benefit from the Mentoring programme, which provides them with technical support and regular feedback on their Small Grant Projects. In addition to the Small Grant Recipients, other participants also work with a mentor to build their skills for advocacy on social media.

> <sup>small</sup> GRANTS



#### Youth Champions Small Grants Projects 2013 - 2014

From 2012 and 2015, the projects have included capacity building workshops, research projects, websites, new and social media projects and misoprostol hotlines. This report provides an overview of the Small Grants projects and the support provided for grantees through the mentoring programme.

#### Bangladesh Youth Champion: Krishti Aung Leona Project: Menstrual Regulation for All

Krishti Aung along with the Bangladesh Assembly of Youth Advocates (BAYA) conducted a one day training on "Menstrual Regulation for All". Although abortion is restricted in Bangladesh, Menstrual Regulation (MR) is used to terminate early pregnancies.

The aim of the project was to educate and create social awareness about MR services for the young girls and women living in the Dhaka slums and among the young girls working in the garment factories. The training was conducted with 50 women from the slums in Dhaka.

#### Krishti Aung Leona **BANGLADESH** Project: MR for All

#### Training Outcomes/Indicators: A) Menstrual Regulation

- 96% of our trainees were completely unaware of MR Services. Majority of them didn't know what it is.
- As a result of the training, 50 women from 50 different families now know the proper time they should undergo MR.
- They know where they can avail of MR Services. They also have the contact numbers of the local MR service providers and the address of the local Government MR Service Centres.
- They are now aware of the consequences of an unsafe abortion.
- These women are now peer-educators. They know what to do if they have missed a period and are spreading their knowledge on Reproductive Health with other young women living in their slums.
- Most importantly, these 50 women have built a strong network in between them. They have exchanged their cell phone numbers. Many trainees became friends and promised to help and suggest each other in tough times.
- In one of our sessions, where many opened up about their stories of unsafe abortion, marital rapes and domestic violence the bonds between them grew stronger.
- Earlier all these women couldn't differentiate between an unsafe abortion and MR. But after the training all their doubts have been clarified.

#### **B)** Basics of Contraception:

- These women were not aware that Birth-Control Pills are available free of cost at the local Government Primary Health Care Centres. Now they are aware and are making use of this facility and also spreading the word.
- Earlier most of them used to take up to two to three contraceptive measures to prevent an unwanted pregnancy. Now they know the differences between contraceptive pills, condoms, IUDs and ECPs. Now they can easily choose their appropriate contraceptive measure.
- These 50 women now know how to properly use and dispose a condom and how to check if it has failed.

menstrual REGULATION

for all.

• They are aware of STDs and STIs.

#### C) Menstrual Hygiene Management

- Our trainees are now aware of the negative consequences of unhygienic practices during menstruation.
- They know how to properly wear, change and dispose of a sanitary napkin.
- These 50 women are now aware of all hygiene methods/techniques they should adopt during their periods.

# MRHALL

Youth Champions Yu Yang and Sun Xiaoting started a feminist forum to Increase visible discussions on gender and women's rights issues in China. The objective was to create a dynamic feminist network in China by providing thought leadership to women's rights issues in mainstream and social media and research on whether safe abortion issues have been set on women's rights agendas of Chinese feminism organizations.

Feminist Forum on

> ABORTION ADVOCACY

#### They created a platform on Chinese Social Media

(**Renren:** www.renren.com/585708176/profile, **Weibo:** www.weibo.com/u/3064994567) and conducted Youth Workshops. The first ASAP China workshop, Sexual and Reproductive health (SRHR) of Chinese women-ASAP, was held in Beijing on 25th July 2015. 12 young participants from different organizations all over China, including feminist and SRHR NGOs joined the workshop.

Yu Yang introduced the participants to ASAP's work and helped them to identify the challenges faced by women. It was found that women from rural areas, migrant workers, young girls and sex workers are more vulnerable to sexual and reproductive health issues.

Xiong Jing, a volunteer of Bcome (a feminist organization that has been performing Vagina Monologues in Chinese), introduced their work and discussed how one can combine SRHR issues with drama. Zhao Zhen, the executive director of Youth Lead China, shared true stories of migrant women and lesbians in China who suffered from sexual and reproductive problems. After that all the 12 participants joined the discussion and shared their opinions about why they think NGOs should put the SRHR of women into their current working frames.

The workshop helped Youth Champions in China map the Chinese feminist NGOs. The bridge was built between ASAP and Chinese feminists. Gu Huaying, from Bcome will also be participating in the 4th Youth Advocacy Institute to be held in Colombo.

#### Indonesia Youth Champion: Ignatia Alfa Gloria Project: Mainstreaming SRHR Issues Towards Young People Through a Website

Under this project Ignatia organized an SRHR and creative writing workshop for 1.5 months. The classes were held in partnership with the Communication Science's lecture at the University of Atma Jaya Yogyakarta. A series of workshops were conducted every Saturday from April 2015 - May 2015; 15 young people who are passionate about gender and sexuality issues and are willing to write about it participated in the workshop See more at: http://asap-asia.org/blog/youth-in-indonesia-create-their-own-future-or-talking-about-sex-an d-gender-in-indonesia-youth-champion-ignatia/#sthash.9GovqHYa.dpuf

#### Ignatia Alfa Gloria INDONESIA <sub>Website</sub>

#### Activity:

1. April 11th: The facilitator for the first workshop was Ayu Ajiasmara, an SRHR activist in Jogjakarta who gave an introduction to sexuality and gender, gender based injustice, and how media constructs gender stereotypes.

2. April 18th: Workshop day 2 facilitators were Tia Setiyani and Renate. Renate talked about Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE). The next session talked about body image and the participants watched a film on beauty-related around the world. Participants were asked to write their opinion about body images as a weekly task.

3. April 25th: Workshop day 3, saw a session on sexual and reproductive organs, puberty, myths and facts about sexuality, and STIs. Facilitators Ayu Ajiasmara and Tia Setiyani spoke about deconstructing myths and facts around these issues. In the last session of the day, participants were split into 4 groups. Their task was to ask people around the building about their opinion on virginity, sex workers, homosexuality and polygamy and write a small article based on the information.

4. May 02: Workshop day 4, facilitator Anastasia Kiki took a session on human rightsdefinition, principals, and its implementation in Indonesia. To understand more about that, the facilitator created some cases and asked participants to express their stance regarding the statement.

5. May 09: Workshop day 5, Inna Hudaya facilitated a session on Abortion Rights. The participants learnt about the 12 reproductive health rights and then used them as a tools to analyze certain cases that had taken place in Jogjakarta. We also learned about journalism ethics code.

6. May 23rd: Workshop day 6, Dina and Bonaventura facilitated the session; it began with watching a movie titled 'Ragate Anak'. The movie told us about the women in Bolo, East Java, who work as stonebreakers during day and sex workers on the night. After watching the film, participants were asked to write an article with their opinion of the movie. They also learned about empathy journalism and how to interview in a neutral manner.

mainstreaming SRHR issues online.

#### **Outcome:**

- The community- created a Facebook group with participants, the purpose is to share information and discuss issues related to gender and sexuality. The idea is to keep them updated on SRHR issues, and motivate them to continue to write.
- Blog will be launching a blog AYO NGOBROL which means 'let's talk' in English. The domain www.ayongobrol.com has already been bought, right now, it's still under maintenance to prepare a better layout and content for adolescents. Plan to launch the blog with a workshop in some school as a promotion method.

#### India Youth Champion: Preet Manjusha Project: To study the impact of the law against sex determination on women's access to safe abortion in India

Preet conducted a study to understand the impact of the anti sex- selection programs on access to safe abortion in some districts of western Maharashtra. The study revealed that many private medical practitioners are refusing women who are seeking abortion services because of fear of harassment from the PCPNDT implementation authorities. She also documented 12 case studies of women who were denied abortion services by authorized service providers. These studies reveal that due to the denial of safe abortion services, many women continued their unwanted pregnancies and some tried other ways to terminate and then faced many complications. The findings of the study have been published in the July 2015 issue of Reproductive Health Matters.



India Youth Champion: Shweta Krishnan Project: The Unfortunate Entanglement- a study of safe abortion and sex selection: unpacking the conflation caused by misinterpretation of laws and poor understanding of social realities

Shweta Krishnan conducted in-depth interviews with key stakeholders working on the antisex selection campaign as well as those working on issues of the girl child, safe abortion access and women's rights. The findings of the study were presented at a meeting on Sex Selection and Safe Abortion Rights held in New Delhi on 20th June 2015. The study attempted at unpacking a conflation caused in part by issues with the implementation of laws and a poor understanding of social contexts. Shweta noted that abortion in itself is already a stigmatized issue, even in the absence of the problems with sex selection. Despite a law passed over four decades ago, access to services is still limited. Many reasons have been documented repeatedly and include a lack of public funding, lack of facilities and trained practitioners in the public sector. There is also a pervasive ignorance about the MTP Act and social stigma attached to abortions.

> For a detailed report visit: http://asap-asia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/ASAP-CREA-Meeting-Report.pdf

SEMINAR Safe Abortion: a public health concern

#### India Youth Champion: Souvik Pyne Project: Seminar on "Safe abortion: a public health priority"

On 21st Feb 2015 a seminar on " Safe Abortion: A Public Health Priority" was conducted by Dr. Souvik Pyne with Public Health students and professionals at Seminar Hall, Achutha Menon Centre for Health Science Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

72 participants attended the seminar; the goal was to sensitize them on safe abortion as a gender and rights issue. The panel discussed the social and health system/provider issues entangled with access to safe abortion. The issue of conscientious objection and negative effect of anti sex-selection laws on MTP service provisioning were also touched upon. Some participating ObGyns shared their experiences too. The panelists also answered various questions asked from the floor in tune with these issues. Highlights from the feedback received:

- The seminar was well organized and interesting which helped to understand many important aspects regarding safe abortion.
- Contraception is widely advertised but lack of information is prevalent.
- More emphasis is needed on promoting safe abortion as a women's right.
- More emphasis is also needed in realizing a doctor about his/her duties.
- We need to focus on dealing with abortion stigma.
- Sex education including use of contraception should be introduced in the normal school curriculum at least from high school and onwards.
- The seminar provided a useful understanding on the role Public Health Professionals can play in promoting access to safe abortion.

#### Nepal Youth Champion: Smriti Thapa and Anu Tha Project: Safe Abortion Through Gender Lens

Smriti Thapa and Anu Thapa organized a workshop to sensitiz doctors who are providing abortion services and to visualize lens, thus further motivating them to provide more cultur centered rights based abortion care. 32 people participated i facilitator. The participants were directly or indirectly associated

The session started with the basic idea of gender and sex. This activity where participants were divided into two groups and ga came to earth and they wanted to be man and woman. It then power relations and highlighted upon the issue of sex selectio The range of interactive topics covered included sexual and re unsafe abortion worldwide, what it means to be pro- choice.

In the next session the participants watched a video on traditio abortion methods in Achham https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9EGL4X5wMc (A remote far west district in Nepal). It was a heart-wrenching story of Sushila Jaishi who was forced to fight with death in the district hospital for 16 days. It highlighted patriarchy, stigma, lack of awareness, unavailability and the tradition.





### GENDER LENS on Safe Abortion

Even with the legalization of abortion in Nepal, unsafe traditional methods are still in practice in most of the rural areas either because of negligence or lack of awareness. This session was followed by Values clarification and a discussion on safe abortion services in Nepal and its barriers. Post lunch session started with a small video on unsafe abortion around the world followed by a discussion. The session of prochoice and prolife was kept till the end, which turned out to be very interesting. The session ended after having post-test and certificate distribution to all the participants. This was the first part of the project. The second part which was planned to be in Kathmandu in 2nd May had to be postponed due to tragic earthquake of 7.8 magnitude on April 25th.

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"SAFE ABORTION THROUGH GENDER LENS"

Nariana Gammy Chil

#### **Read more here-**

http://asap-asia.org/blog/safe-abortion-through-gender-lens/#sthash.yXa8dXaY.dpbs http://asap-asia.org/blog/attitude-change-in-a-young-doctor-interview-by-smriti-thapa/#sth ash.GgxQjPYy.dpbs

#### Nepal Youth Champion: Saru Shilpkar and Shreejana Bajracharya Peer Education for Capacity building and Advocacy on Sexual Reproductive Health and rights and Safe Abortion

Saru Shilpkar and Shreejana Bajracharya organized Peer Education workshop on Capacity building and Advocacy on Sexual Reproductive Health and rights and Safe Abortion. The goal was to empower young people (age15-24) to make informed decisions and choices regarding their SRH and rights. The main objectives were to strengthen the capacity of youth and increase access to discuss and share young people's thoughts and problems.

A training was conducted with 15 participants. This was seen as a very good platform for development as a peer educator with information on healthy relationship and safe abortion. Participants learnt different styles, energizers and techniques to conduct the SRHR classes in friendly and motivated way. Most of the participants liked the use of pictures in different activities.

#### **Outcome:**

- All the participants were enthusiastic to learn more about young people's SRHR.
  All the participants were friendly and open, and participated actively in different sessions from the first day. All the participants seemed confident talking about SRHR
- topics without being shy or embarrassed.
  The experience sharing by Youth Champions and facilitators after discussion was
- effective.

The overall experience sharing in the different sessions by Youth Champions and facilitators was effective. It helped realize the difficult scenarios that facilitators might

• face in the field.

The participants became confident in the subject matters at the second training.



## **VIDEO** CONTEST

#### Nepal Youth Champion: Deepa Pradhan and Puja Karki Video Contest on Why I Support Safe Abortion

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On 27th and 28th of April, the Youth Champions Deepa and Puja organized a two day training and a video competition supported by ASAP and MSI/SPN. The focus of the program was:

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- To sensitize a group of youth with understanding of safe abortion as a human right issue.
- To articulate the legalization and situation of safe abortion services in Nepal among the youth.
- To utilize videos as tools on social media to support safe abortion as SRHR issue as well as human right issue.

25 participants from different social organization and colleges were involved. All the participants were very energetic and keen to know more about safe abortion. Further, resource person was very humble and gave detail information regarding safe abortion. On the first day they were provided with training regarding Understanding Gender and Sexuality, Human Rights, Sexual and Reproductive Rights, Reproduction, Contraception and Safe Abortion, which helped the participants to know more about the concept, history and practice of safe abortion nationally and internationally. The participants were trained on concept and way of making a video supporting safe abortion as human right. For this the participants were provided with different useful materials like data about safe abortion, study materials and were showed different video clips.

On the second day, the participants approached the trainers with ideas regarding safe abortion and human rights. They helped them to portray the ideas effectively on their videos. Then, they were asked to submit their videos on 30th April. On 30th April, all participants submitted their videos. Youth champions with the help of MSI members choose top five videos and rewarded them with gifts and participatory certificate.

#### Nepal Youth Champion: Minal Singh Project: Interaction Program with Media Journalists on Safe abortion and Women Rights

Minal Singh organized an Interaction Program with Journalists on Safe abortion and Women's Rights with an objective to advocate for the need of women to be able to fully exercise their sexual and reproductive rights and to sensitize media on their in promoting women's reproductive rights in Nepal. A one-day interaction was organized on June 14th, 2015 and 12 participants attended the workshop. Key topics discussed included: safe abortion and women's rights, unsafe abortion, barriers to safe abortion, should safe abortion services be made free at government health facilities and the role of media in advocacy of safe abortion issues. Following are some of the concerns that were highlighted by the participants:

- If the government declares free safe abortion services at government health facilities, does it create a burden for the government? If so, how much loss does the government incure as a result?
- In many parts of the country, women continue to have unwanted pregnancies because couples don't use family planning devices due to existing traditional practice and myths and misconceptions.
- Why is there disparity in service fees in government and private facilities?
- Government and NGOs work together in the abortion programs but rarely do they involve the media in such programs. Because of this, a communication gap exists and the matter of safe abortion has not been highlighted much in print or electronic media.

#### **Outcome:**

Participants have created a Hotmail group and have shown interest in staying connected and receivinv more material on SRH issues. Some handouts have already been forwarded to them via e-mail. The Facebook group is yet to be created, this will be done soon.



Philippines Youth Champion: Sarah Jane Biton Project: PAC Forum

Sarah Jane set up "Women's Rights Collective": a Post Abortion Care (PAC) advocacy forum to raise awareness on abortion rights among Filipino women. As part of the small grant she also set up a safe abortion blog and Facebook page. The project aims to contribute to raising the awareness of Filipinos regarding abortion rights by conducting community education sessions. Further, it intends to organize and mobilize post abortion care volunteers and safe abortion rights advocates by inviting participants of the Community Education Session (CES) to be part of the collective. And lastly to gather data about post abortion care violations and experiences through community immersion.

PAC ADVOCACY FORUM

#### The project ran from May- June 2015.

Activity 1: Conducted a scientific and community-oriented information dissemination session on post-abortion care and abortion stigma, in Metro Manila and Camarines Sur. Activity 2: Organized Post-Abortion Care volunteers and safe abortion rights advocates. Activity 3: Data gathering (life stories) of men and women who experience abortion stigma and post abortion care violations. The biggest challenge is how to tap a community or a group who can help us with project implementation. Even the progressive women's groups don't want to be involved.

- Time management. Managing our time is really a challenge, since apart from our own concerns, we need to also consider the available time of the target participants.
- Limited time for the session on community education. Since most of the participants only have 2-3 hours, we need to make our point despite the different negative reactions of some participants, just to ensure that they will leave the discussion area with a grasp of our key message.
- On how to handle the discussion itself. Every discussion is different. We tend to adjust based on their answers about their views on abortion. If the group is a bit progressive, we handle the discussion more progressively, discussing more about the human rights angle. But if the group is really backward, we have to start first with values clarification and attitude transformation.
- Data gathering.

#### **Outcomes:**

- Collaboration with Kadamay/Sining Kadamay, FPOP Tandang Sora, Barangay Batasan Hills and Camarines Sur Chapter.
- Community Education Sessions: In Metro Manila, 11 sessions involving adults, young adults and young people with 68 participants were conducted. In Aklan Province, we had 2 young people and a discussion with the Y-Peer group. In Camarines Sur, 7 sessions with 153 participants were conducted
- The key message for the CES: "Abortion is a public health issue. Women die from unsafe abortion. Abortion is prohibited in the Philippines. However, we support the DOH policy on Prevention and Management of Abortion Complications, which includes Post Abortion Care. Because complications and deaths from unsafe abortion can be prevented."

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#### **Future Plans:**

- 1. Continue the Community Education Sessions, if time permits.
- 2. Develop a module based on learnings from previous discussions
- 3. Supervise the chapter in Metro Manila, and support their planned activities
- 4. Chapter building in Camarines Sur
- 5. Online activities data gathering and other efforts

#### Sri Lanka Youth Champion Lakmini Prabani and Dulitha Harsha Project: Directory of Abortion Friendly Health Care Providers and Institutes in Colombo

Lakmini Prabani and Dulitha Harsha are conducting a Mapping study of Abortion friendly healthcare service providers and institutes within Colombo. The goal of the project is to make a database on healthcare services, health personnel (Doctors/ Gynecologists) and organizations (government and nongovernmental organizations) that are sensitive towards safe abortion and provide information and services within Colombo. They are now putting together a small booklet with the details of pharmacies and other organizations

As part of the study, they met few employees from the Health Ministry, Health Education Bureau and made a list of pharmacies and healthcare providers accordingly before visiting each area. They also collected details about organizations that are abortion friendly and visited nearly 30 pharmacies within Colombo 1, 2, 3 and 4.

#### **Ongoing steps:**

- Visiting pharmacies in Colombo 4, 5, 6 and 7
- Getting appointments and visiting the rest of the organizations
- Translating key terms like abortion, medical abortion and the steps of using misoprostol into local languages to add in the final document
- Finish covering the rest of the pharmacies and organizations
- Gathering information and contact details about places that provide illegal abortions and services (medical & surgical)
- Listing down the nature of services provided
- Designing the final document

### Lakmini Prabani & Dulitha Harsha SRI LANKA

3S VALENTINE COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

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Vietnam Youth Champion: Son Hoang and Nguyen Thi Thao Project: 3S VALENTINE COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

San Hoang and Nguyen Thi Thao initiated 3S-Valentine which is a communication campaign that aims to raise awareness among young people about Sexual Rights and Safe Sex, with the intention of empowering young people through improving their knowledge and practice regarding Sexual and Reproductive health. On Valentine's day 14th February 2015, 3S – Valentine sent messages about making appropriate decision (Smart), body confidence and self-perceived attractiveness (Sexy) and safety in Love and Sexual Relationship (Safe). The goal was to raise the awareness of Hanoi School of Public Health (HSPH) students and young people in the community about Sexual Rights and Safe Sex on Valentine's Day 2015.

smart sexy safe

#### **Activities and Achievements**

#### **Interactive Drama Skills Course**

On 27th January, a training course was organized for young people's core group on interactive drama skills. Members of the training course included from the core group and representatives from classes and clubs of Universities participated in the contest. The core group played the role of actors and representatives from the classes and clubs were leaders of their respective groups – who were candidates of the contest.

#### **Outcome:**

90% of participants have appropriate knowledge on Gender, Sexual & Reproductive Health and Rights, contraceptive methods, access based on rights, counseling and communication skills.

#### B3S - Drama: An interactive drama contest on SRHR, Safe Sex among young people

Organized B3S - Drama on 6th February (from 6pm to 8.30pm). This was an interactive drama contest. Members of the contest were students from the University. Nine groups participated in the contest and they were given 9 different situations. After the contest, some students who took part were interviewed; most of them said they were satisfied with content and organization and felt very excited since this was the first time they could participate in an activity for young people like that. It could be said, this was also the first time a communication session used interactive drama contest as a medium. However some participants felt that the duration of presentations was short (7 minutes), and that, they did not have enough time to solve their situation.

#### **Outcomes:**

12 participants and students joined the core group to write the drama skit and participate as characters. 9 drama skits have been written

60 YOUTH PARTICIPATED

#### IMAGES https://www.facebook.com/ whynot.taisaokhong

EVENTS https://www.facebook.com/ events/338982946297062

#### **B3S – Challenge**

The second activity was a photo online contest. This is now being published on the fanpage – **Why not?** (https://www.facebook.com/whynot.taisaokhong).

The contest called upon participants to share a picture (individual/ couple/ group) with a heart, (drawn by hand or digitally made) and include the hashtags (Sexy, Smart, Safe). They were then asked to upload it on their Facebook pages along with the #hashtag (either #BeSmart, #B3S, #BeSexy or #BeSafe) with a challenge to 3 other individuals or 2 other couples to do the same.

#### **Outcome:**

193 participants joined More than 6000 people were reached Got 800 views and 241 engagements 50 people took photos and joined the contest More than 100 hashtags were displayed

#### **ASAP: Small Grants Project Report, 2015**



#### **Asia Safe Abortion Partnership**

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