



The Power of

Partnerships: celebrating 10 years of movement building for safe Abortion Advocacy

10th Anniversary Seminar: Conference Report February 2018

KUTH



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From the desk of the Secretariat

The Asia Safe Abortion Partnership was founded in 2008 with 35 individuals from across Asia, recognizing the need for a partnership which would provide a forum for safe abortion advocacy; a forum that would bring the voices from Asia to the global platform, while also supporting country level advocacy by offering technical and solidarity support.

The Asia Safe Abortion Partnership has grown from those small beginnings to now include hundreds of members from almost all countries across South and South East Asia, as well as some in the Middle East.

Along the way we have managed to pioneer hotlines in Asia, (working with Women on Web), co-found the International Campaign for Women's Right to Safe Abortion, support the setting up of 8 Country Advocacy Networks and work with hundreds of amazing, inspiring and passionate advocates and activists across the region and the globe.

We wanted to celebrate this wonderful journey with all our members and partners and supporters hand in hand with some amazing partners working towards the transformation of the world as we know it. Some come in the guise of funders, some as Country Network mentors, some as Youth Champions, some as trainers.

We are now delighted to share with you the highlights of the conference The Power of Partnerships!

We welcome all of you to join us as we look forward to the next 10 years with gratitude for your support and a vision of a better life for all the women and girls in our region!

Planning is everything!

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Start with: 92 Youth Champions, members and partners from across 23 countries.

A dash of technical updates

A spoonful of support (working with intergenerational mentors to guide youth leadership), a pinch of hope (doctors as change agents)

A sprinkling of optimism (evolution of the feminist movement and weaving intersectional movements into the safe abortion rights one)



Then toss in a hands- on MVA demo stall using dragon fruit, and a vasectomy stall using kiwi fruit and pasta.

Blend in a self- care stall and scatter around them a sparkling photobooth.

(Even the best followed recipes can often go haywire! We found an unexpected twist in the tale when the balloons containing the post abortion contraception quiz questions were taken away by children from the wedding in the neighbouring hall. Their parents are going to have fun evening...)

Fold in a stand-up comedy, whip up some live singing, Bollywood and belly dancing and drop in an awards ceremony to rival the best in the world.



Ta Da! We had ourselves a cauldron of bubbling gold! That's the alchemy and the power of partnerships! We will try to capture that magic and energy in this report but really, you should have been there! Hopefully next time!





Dr. Unnop Jaisamram, Steering Committee member ASAP, offered a warm welcome to everyone. Dr. Suchitra Dalvie, Coordinator of ASAP then made some introductory remarks.



Dr. Bunyarit from Ministry of Health, Thailand spoke briefly talked about the obstacles that they have faced in Thailand during the legalization of abortion but how things are progressing well now.

Swetha Sridhar, Communication Officer, ASAP, gave pointers on connecting and sharing during the conference (QR scanner, hashtags)

Keynote Address 1: Dr. S.P. Choong



Session Chair: Prof. Kamheang Chaturachinda

Dr. Sim- Poey Choong is one of the founder members of ASAP and its first Chairperson. He reflected on the wonderful 10 year journey, despite all the difficult situations we faced with funding and other challenges. He gave credit to members of Steering Committee and all the staff for the dedication and passion they bring to their work and contributions. He also reminisced about his contribution at the founding when he had suggested that we should use the word abortion in the name of the network rather than self- censoring using words that hide it like reproductive health/ maternal health!

"An important point we need to remember is that safe abortion is not just a health issue, it is a human rights issue. Despite our progress in the area of abortion and contraception in terms of technology, women have not been able to access it simply because of the patriarchal societies that limit women from accessing them. In many parts of Asia we still have a very high mortality of women due to unsafe abortion practices. The bitter truth is that even now, many health care professionals don't have proper knowledge about abortion including medical and surgical abortion methods. Our main focus is to create an attitude change among people including health care providers so that women can have the right over their own bodies. We have come a long way but there are still miles to go and we still a lot to do ensure safe abortion and sexual and reproductive health and rights."



Keynote address 2: Sarah Soysa



Co-founder, Youth Advocacy Network Sri Lanka

She started her presentation by stating briefly the importance of the right to abortion and the reasons why safe abortion is not available in different nations. She also pointed out that it is very difficult to have conversations about abortion, **noting that conversations about women's sexuality is limited only to reproduction.** She also called attention to the diverse links between safe abortion services and other SRHR issues, and argued that our fight and advocacy should also be aimed at those issues.

Talking about her nation, Sri Lanka, she stated that abortion laws are not liberal there, along with a lack of women's participation in decision making process as an outcome of deeply rooted patriarchal society. She then pointed out how to develop advocacy around safe abortion and taking it to spaces of large discourse. Following constant support and mentoring from ASAP Secretariat, the Youth Champions in Sri Lanka have been continuously working for advocating safe abortion and other sexual and reproductive health and rights issues related to it, organizing different campaigns and sensitization programs. She further talked about the Sustainable Development Goals and how women's access to safe abortion has been mentioned as part of the agenda.

ASAP has been supporting regional partnerships for advocacy through inter-generational mentorship at local, national and regional level. This support which allows Youth Champions to take part in global forums which has helped a lot in youth activism back in their own country and providing them with an opportunity to lead and advocate.

ASAP has come a long, exhausting and challenging way due to its strong solidarity, support, love, trust, integrity and still has a long way forward to ensure the safe abortion to all women despite any circumstances.



Session 1: Yes we CAN!

Chair: Dr. Shilpa Shroff, Assistant Coordinator ASAP

Panellists: Pushpa Joshi Pradhan, Priskila Arulapragasam, Mai Doan Thuy, Riti Sanghvi and Naureen Lalani



The objective of this session was to showcase the work being done by the Youth Champions at country level and the trajectory of the Country Advocacy Networks in working on safe abortion advocacy at the national and local level. ASAP as a regional network has three levels of functioning. As a regional network we provide a regional platform for safe abortion activists and advocates to share ideas, provide thought leadership and building capacity on technical and political issues. We are also a forum that can represent the voices from Asia at global platforms for political advocacy or sharing of ground realities. Advocacy for changes in law and policy as well as service delivery need a country focus and that is the role of the CANs, which are **youth led while being supported by inter-generational mentoring** from experienced leaders in the field. The CAN teams explore and analyze the advocacy and political landscape and develop action plans. In the very short time of their being set up, they have already played an important role in bringing the voice of the young people to the notice of policymakers, health care providers and the relevant social media and mass media in their countries.

Pushpa Joshi, Youth Champions Advocacy Network, Nepal. (Y-CAN)

Established in 2015, as the first Country Advocacy Network, YCAN has vision of society where every man especially women and girls will have proper SRHR as outlined in human rights. Their activities cover a diverse range from National Youth Advocacy Institutes to sensitization programs for Female Community Health Volunteers.

Priskila Arulapragasam, Youth Advocacy Network, Sri Lanka (YAN-SL)

Abortion in the context of Sri Lanka is legalized only in circumstances when the woman's life is in danger. There is limited knowledge about sexual and reproductive health and rights even among service providers. Being the only youth led organization, YANSL currently works at different levels of capacity building and advocacy to ensure the understanding of safe abortion as a right and to improve access to safe and legal abortion. One of important projects they have undertaken is the development of a guide for SRHR terminology in sign language.

Mai Doan Thuy, Vietnam Youth Action for Choice, Vietnam

Despite having clear and liberal laws around abortion, there is still stigma around safe abortion, contraception and other sexual and reproductive health issues. VYAC has been working with training at medical, nursing and pharmacy colleges on gender and rights issues and also undertaken innovative activities such as the use of sports for advocacy for abortion. They have been working actively using social media and also various college and university forums to engage with young people.

Riti Sanghvi, India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates, India

ISAY is an advocacy network of medical students from India working on gender and rights sensitization among their colleagues in an effort to build a generation of future providers who will see the safe abortion issue in a different way. Besides workshops, they have also been looking at their own medical textbooks and analyzing them to identify the elements of misogyny and gender insensitive information which can create the wrong attitudes among medical students.

Naureen Lalani, Sind and Punjab Chapter of Youth Advocacy Network, Pakistan

The abortion law in Pakistan allows it for saving the life of the woman and also to provide necessary treatment. The team had conducted research on the attitudes of media and health care providers and found that all of the media persons and most of the health care workers thought that abortion is illegal and they also had very negative attitudes towards the issue of safe abortion services. Their network has also been working actively with women and girls living with disabilities and youth network there have also expanded works with disability and have also conducted trainings and sensitization programs.



Dession 2: When the going gets tough

Chair: Sarah Soysa

Panellists: Katayon Sadat, Sarah Jane Biton, Rola Yasmine, and Nikzad Zangeneh



Across our region, every country has a different law and policy around safe abortion but some countries have an environment which is hostile and even dangerous for safe abortion advocacy. Situations like **fundamentalist governments**, **refugee crisis**, **humanitarian issues and religious control** make the conditions extremely tough to speak out about women's rights. Through this panel discussion we heard from brave and committed advocates and activists from Afghanistan, Iran, Lebanon and the Philippines. Each one of them faces a uniquely difficult environment and has used some very different strategies and built alliances which allow them to speak out and push for a greater understanding of women

Dr Katayon Sadat, ObGyn, Malalai Hospital, Kabul, Afghaistan, Steering Committee member ASAP

Abortion is legal in Afghanistan only when the life of mother is in danger. She spoke of a deeply troubling personal experience when as a junior doctor she came across a young woman who had obviously died from severe hemorrhage and how the girl's family said that doctors were responsible for her death because they sought help from everyone they could find but no one helped them get her a safe abortion, thus forcing her into an unsafe abortion. That incident made her resolve that when she became a qualified doctor she would do her best to help every such woman and girl she could.

In Afghanistan they face daily challenges of the security issues due to the presence of religious fundamentalists but also from the highly restrictive abortion law and policy, low capacity of human resources, cultural barriers, and abortion being a low priority issue for the government.

Since participating in a workshop in Cambodia conducted by Marie Stopes International and ASAP, she started working on developing and formalizing Post Abortion Care (PAC) guidelines. These have been approved by the government, and due to the advocacy done by their team, misoprostol has also been listed as an essential drug for PAC! With support from ASAP she has now also trained around 200 doctors on MVA (Manual Vacuum Aspiration) for post abortion care.

Sarah Jane Biton, the Philippines, a Registered Nurse and multimedia artist, who is currently conducting youth development program advocating safe abortion.

The Reproductive Health Bill of her country states that abortion is a crime and punishable as per declaration that "the state shall equally protect the life of mother and life of unborn from time of conception". Although post abortion care has been legalized, due to the stigma on abortion, it is not properly implemented. This law emphasizes the use of family planning and contraception for preventing abortion without even analyzing the prevalence of rape/incest which is about lwomen/child per hour.

The President of their country who has been branded a misogynist and "macho-fascist" especially after he ordered soldiers to shoot female communist rebels in the vagina. She also mentioned about the drug war and extrajudicial killings because of which, many innocent people including activists and feminists, have become victims along with suspected drug users and dealers. It is now a very difficult time for them to defend human rights. She finally concluded by saying that they were in their darkest days with fascism, killing and attack on women and girls' rights, and their movement and they need global help and solidarity to defend their human right.

Nikzad Zangeneh, Iran, feminist-activist, freelance facilitator and researcher

Abortion is legal in Iran only when the woman's life is in danger and also in case of fetal abnormalities that makes it not viable after birth. In a country where 1 out of 3 women experience abortion in their lifetime, many women are forced to undergo unsafe abortion due to these restrictions. Of course not all legal abortions are safe and not all illegal abortions are unsafe.

She concluded by saying that no women can be free, until she has control over her own body.

Rola Yasmine, Lebanon, founder of 'The A project'

Due to its geographical situation, Lebanon has become an obvious destination for Syrians trying to escape the civil war. They have also had Palestinian refugees living there for more than one generation. It is very tricky to live in a place where the law is made for citizens, when almost half the people who live in that place are not citizens, and don't benefit from the law! The migrant workers also face similar difficulties and rights violations due to their vulnerability.

The institutionalized racism and xenophobia has limited refugees' and migrant's access to all sorts of basic services, especially to reproductive and safe abortion services.





Session 3: Shifting sands and balancing advocacy efforts

Moderator: Sarah Jane Biton Discussant: Barbara Klugman

Panellists: Yu Yang, Pritam Potdar, Anika Binte Habib, Smriti Thapa, Shilpa Shroff

Advocacy is all about creating support for an issue—whether a community based intervention or a focused strategy for change in policy. The difficulty often lies in assessing and adapting to the sociocultural-political context within which this needs to be done since it is always shifting, in subtle or dramatic ways. In this session we heard from Youth Champions whose advocacy has had to negotiate such changing priorities while still maintaining the focus on women's rights to control their own bodies.

Yu Yang, China: Abortion access in China, in absence of a rights based environment

Though abortion is legal, safe and

affordable, nobody talks about it and it is highly stigmatized. Both medical and surgical abortions are available quite freely but the laws are highly restrictive for single mothers, so they have hard time accessing abortion. Despite this , statistics show that young women under 25 account for 47.5% of the total surgical abortions, which is the highest in the world. Among them, 49% of them have never delivered before.

There are so many private clinics that offer safe abortion access through such advertisements that one needs to reflect on what this means! Is access enough even if safe if there is no environment of sexuality education, sexual and reproductive rights and autonomy? Sex selection is also a serious issue in China and is affecting the way safe abortion can be discussed as a right.

Anika Binte Habib, Bangladesh: Menstrual Regulation as a strategy in Bangladesh

Abortion is legal in Bangladesh only to save the life of the woman. However, Menstrual Regulation (MR) is part of the legally available services for women who have delayed menses. MR training is given not only to doctors but also to midwives in an attempt to expand access to services. Despite this, most women are unaware about it due to stigma and lack of publically available information. Unsafe abortion still claims many lives.



Preet Manjusha, India: Impact of sex selection on safe abortion access

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act was passed in India in 1971 in order to legalize abortion under certain circumstances. Despite this a large number of women continue to die each year due to unsafe abortions. Over the last two decades the concerns over sex determination and its impact on the sex ratio has led to even more difficulties around safe abortion access and contributed to an increased stigma around the issue. Samyak is working with private and public sector doctors, government officials, media and NGO communities to engage in trust building. They want to create visibility for the understanding that sex determination is a gender discrimination issue while women's right to safe abortion needs to be protected at all costs.

Smriti Thapa, Nepal: Changing the law in Nepal

Abortion was criminalized in Nepal till recently and in the 1990s the country had one of the highest maternal mortality rates, largely due to unsafe abortions. After almost two decades of advocacy by civil society, women's rights groups and others, abortion was de-criminalized and now the country has one of the most liberal laws in the world. Despite this, due to the socio-cultural environment where religion and patriarchy dominate, there is still much stigma around the topic. Maternal mortality has reduced drastically due to the improved access but now sex determination is emerging as a serious challenge.

Shilpa Shroff, ASAP: Experience of working with hotlines

ASAP had collaborated with Women on Web to pioneer the first misoprostol hotlines in Pakistan. Since then the work has expanded to more countries including India, Indonesia, Lebanon, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Philippines. Hotlines are important since women can access accurate information on the selfuse of Misoprostol while maintaining confidentiality. In addition to providing both technical support and training, ASAP contributed to the setting up of M&E systems for the hotlines using qualitative and quantitative data. This data is vital to understand the unmet need of the community and also for analyzing the information and support needs of the women who call. The hotlines have faced a lot of challenges



ranging from threatening calls from police and religious leaders, lack of funding support and the young unmarried women running the hotlines not being acceptable in a patriarchal society. While hotlines may still be needed, ASAP believes that it should not be set up as a parallel system which allows governments to not take responsibility for the unmet need and to set up public sector based safe, free and effective counseling and abortion services access.

At the end of this very informative session, Barbara Klugman shared her observations as a discussant. She noted that it is possible to evaluate advocacy with the evidence from ASAP's progress. She reminded the audience to value the works and achievements of the Youth Champions. She reflected that though funding grants are not very large, the funders expect to see dramatic shifts which are a challenge for the young people, especially when working on such difficult and controversial issues.

Food for thought!

Along with tea break we had some engaging and fun stalls set up where participants could learn MVA techniques, take some photos and figure out their self care needs.



Jession 4: Making advocacy fun!

Moderators: Ignatia Alfa Gloria and Swetha Sridhar

Panellists: Simran Garg, Le Hoang Minh San, Dema Wangchuk, and Tanzila Khan

Although the issue of safe abortion rights advocacy is necessarily fuelled by anger at the needless deaths of women and girls, the process of learning about advocacy can be made fun! Some creativity, some hands on experience leading to concept clarity, some different ways of getting the message across—we heard from the Youth Champions about fresh ways to involve people in advocacy.



Tanzila Khan, Pakistan

They have been **using theatre** to spread their SRHR ideology in a fun manner. The audience is asked to point out to the sections where they find the actor at fault in their thought or action, replace them and reenact the scene in the way they thought it should go. This unique way helps the people to actually get into someone else's shoes and understand the situation from a different perspective.

Simran Garg, India

They tried a unique experiment of asking the young women to buy condoms from the chemist and the young men to buy sanitary napkins. This had some embarrassing and hilarious results! Katya Saxena's (medical student who is a part of ISAY) experience was shared via video.

Suyash Khubchandani and Naureen Lalani themselves shared their experiences on buying a pack of sanitary pads and condoms and misoprostol respectively.

Dema Wangchuk, Bhutan

As part of the activity conducted by Druk -YISA they held a writing competition for poems and stories with the theme of women having control over their own bodies. She found that young people had very strong positive opinions reflecting in their stories and poetries. As awards they gave them books written by and about strong women.

Le Hoang Minh Sonh, Vietnam

Son's presentation focused on engaging young people and getting them to generate youth friendly content. Building on the idea that active participation in program work can create more interest in the issue, he spoke about how his team worked with young people across a range of art forms such as art and dance to generate attention for SRHR advocacy messages.

Keynote Address 3: Femíníst Movement building: Evolution and processes



This evening keynote address was delivered by Manisha Gupte, who has been a core part of the Youth Advocacy Institutes at ASAP.

She then had a conversation with Carey Choi from Hong Kong and Tanzila Khan from Pakistan about the issues of intersectionality with other movements.

Tanzila spoke of how sexuality comes later to differently abled individuals because of their restrictions on their own selves. Both pointed out how children lack sexual education right from school, either due to the stigma attached to it or because of lack of authentic sources.

Abortion is stigmatized in Hong Kong, while sexuality is spoken about in relation to the LGBT movement but still spoken in a negative light.

Manisha then reflected on how abortion and disability are linked and how as a movement we have yet to address the issue of eugenic abortion being allowed as per law. It is this dichotomy that leads to unease among those advocating against selection for the sex of the fetus but accepting selective abortion for disabilities.





Session 5: The Power of Partnerships

Moderator: Suchitra Dalvie

Panellists: Batya Atlas, Marie Stopes International (Australia Office), Anne Sinic, Medicine du Monde (Paris, France), Tussnai Kantayaporn, Choices Network (Thailand), Anand Pawar, Samyak (India), Jon O'Brien, Catholics for Choice (USA), and George Hale, Promsex (Lima, Peru)

We closed the day with a session on the main theme of the conference the power of partnerships.

ASAP is a network which works by building partnerships and alliances across different stakeholders. It also provides a regional forum which brings the voices from the countries to a global platform while also utilizing global discourses to inform country members. In this panel we discussed what makes for a good partnership and what such collaborations can do to build the synergy and the movement.

Batya Atlas, who works for Government liaison, resource mobilisation, partnerships and



donor relationship management with Marie Stopes International (MSI) in the Asia Pacific region was asked to reflect on the value of partnering as a global organization with regional organizations. In response she talked about how MSI is a global provider of contraception and abortion services and a strong advocate for health education. They have always appreciated regional networks like ASAP that share the same vision or purpose. She added that it brings together people trying to change the national policies and also leads to a perfect balance of complementary skills. Eventually, both partners help each other to think beyond the conventional work that they want to do and thereby, by and large, it leads to the strengthening of individual capacities.

The moderator then summed it up perfectly by saying that partnerships are not just a jigsaw puzzle, but perhaps more like a Rubik's cube, where we need to do many things before the colours all line up on one side!

Anne Sinic was asked about the strategies that can be promoted for building impactful partnerships. She spoke of the role of Medicine du Monde actively trying to include SRHR into their work and advocating for it, empowering women and girls to recognize their sexual and reproductive rights, putting complementary stakeholders together, engaging new humanitarian stakeholders with the movement and sharing information, resources and strategies at forums helps to build powerful partnerships that advocate for change.

The moderator noted how powerful alliances made with greater diversity not only give us greater credibility but they also make us stronger politically.

Tussnai Kantayaporn is currently focussing on strengthening the system to access to safe abortion in her home country, Thailand. The moderator asked her to provide insights on the value add they found by alliance building with a regional network like ASAP. Tussnai noted that the Choices Network has been working silently for the past 5 years for strenghtening referrals for safe abortion, promoting public understanding and advocating for change. She talked about the abortion law in Thailand. She noted that being a part of the work of ASAP has given them confidence by knowing that there are so many brave people across the region facing similar difficulties and working to solve the same issues.

Anand Pawar has been working in the development sector since 1997 was asked about the key elements needed for effective alliances. He spoke of how SAMYAK has always consciously tried to work on trust building. We also need to recognize the value of being involved in each other's movements. For example, if we want the social justice movement to recognize and adopt our agenda, we need to be willing to also commit to the social justice movement agenda and work. The moderator reflected on how critical and often invisible as well as un-measurable these negotiations are but how significantly they impact on the success of our advocacy work!

Jon O'Brien has been a leader in developing global strategies to advance SRHR and effectively countering religious opposition to reproductive health access. He was asked to offer some insights on the evolution process of alliance building. Jon mentioned that he's been working in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe and the most important prerequisite to bringing organizations together is the sharing of common ideologies - in this case being the subversion of hegemony. He also added that when organizations work together, there is sharing of resources, cumulative hardwork for the same goal and when everyone has something to contribute, the organizations get stronger together and their alliance evolves into a super powerful partnership over time.

George Hale, originally a systems engineer and now a Sexuality and Public Policy and LGBTI human rights defender, is a member of CLACAI, which is a network similar to ASAP and working in Latin America. George was asked about the importance of south-south collaboration. He spoke about how the safe abortion issues that a lot of developing countries deal with are around similar issues such as stigma, lack of access and the lack of a rights' based perspective and hence, south-south collaborations help the regional networks to work with country advocacy networks which also allows work with health providers and medical students who are the key stakeholders.

Suchitra Dalvie concluded the session perfectly by noting that the value of a truly successful partnership is that the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts and it is these partnerships that make us grow stronger and work better together.



Round table on conscience and Doctors

A one hour round table dialogue was then moderated by Jon O'Brien, Catholics for Choice and Ann Furedi, Bpas, UK.





The objectives of this dialogue were:

- 1. To understand the perspective of healthcare providers and the exercise of individual conscience
- 2. To re-frame conscientious objection from a pro-choice perspective
- 3. To discuss potential collaborations with medical and nursing colleges to sensitize the teachers.

Dinner & celebration



Keynote Address 4: Sexuality, Feminism and Abortion, Rola Yasmine



Despite the singing and dancing and partying the earlier evening, day two started bright and early at 8 am with the keynote address delivered by Rola Yasmine on Sexuality, Feminism and Abortion.

This session was chaired by **Ninuk Widyantoro**, a psychologist with experience in the area of SRHR, counselling and training, who is currently working on preparing the first formal safe abortion program in Indonesia. She talked about the importance of pursuing legal protections for women's reproductive rights and health, especially safe abortion, and empowering their communities to stand up for their rights. She stressed on the need of working with adolescents and ensuring that they were empowered and able to access non-judgmental health care.

She then introduced Rola Yasmine, the founder of the A Project, a sex-positive platform that has launched a sexuality helpline, writing/audio/visual content and also conducts research, training and workshops with migrant women, young people, refugees and queers.

Rola talked about how she started this work with ASAP 8 years ago and finding similar-minded allies gave her the assurance that we are all in it together. The journey was always a difficult one with patriarchal barriers, with men trying to associate feminine with negativity and forcing women to believe that eventually their bodies are going to face street harassment and that it is completely normal. She talked about how women still do not know that abortion is legal in their countries, forcing them to resort to unsafe techniques. Talking about the Queer community, she mentioned how they are often assumed to be asexual and that abortion services need to be extended to queer women, too. She also mentioned how gay marriage has become more popular than safe abortion, even though it's rarer.

In conclusion, she said that our strength is in our diversities and bodies do not have labels, we create and put them.



Session 7: From Generation A to Z and beyond

Moderators: Pritam Potdar and San Minh Hoang

Panellists: Thao Vi Ngyuen, Mr Cong, Pushpa Joshi, Anand Tamang, M. Sadad, Imrul Khan, Lakmini Perera and Dr. Kapila Jayaratne



We have known for almost a decade now that Asia currently has the highest number of young people it has ever had in history. In order to build capacity of the youth and to empower them to understand and advocate for their own sexual and reproductive rights, with a special focus on the right to safe abortion, ASAP began working with young people around 8 years ago. Since then we have had the opportunity to engage with and mentor a few hundred Youth Champions across Asia.

This evolved into supporting the setting up of Country Advocacy Networks which would provide youth leadership to safe abortion advocacy work at national level. While many young people have had the unfortunate experience of being involved in a tokenistic fashion, we have worked hard to ensure that these Country Networks are definitely youth led. However, we have also encouraged them to always seek the support of inter- generational mentors who can guide and facilitate their work. This panel was a conversation with 4 such CANs to share their experience of how this has worked.

Session 8: Doctors as Agents of Change

Moderated by Dr. Amar Jesani

Panellists: Dr Ea Mulligan, Dick Van der Tak, Ann Furedi, Aakarshan Timilsena, Shreeya Mashelkar, and Maneepunnarai Jiwjinda.



As all doctors would remember, Rudolf Virchow (1821-1902) of the Virchow node and the triad is also known as the founder of social medicine. After his experience with failing to contain the cholera epidemic in Germany he coined the aphorism: **"Medicine is a social science, and politics is nothing else but medicine on a large scale"**.

Medical and nursing professionals have always been at the forefront of providing care in difficult and dangerous situations and have stepped up on behalf of the vulnerable and marginalized during natural disasters, wars or internal displacement. However, although the medical profession has made progress in recognizing and protecting the human rights of women, not enough has been done by medical professionals to prevent and manage unwanted pregnancies by advocating for and providing access to safe abortion and post-abortion contraception using available platforms, social and professional networks and technology.

ASAP had coordinated a meeting of representatives of networks of healthcare professionals in the region 3 years ago in order to explore the potential for collaboration and discuss the willingness and possibilities for a greater inclusion of programs for managing unwanted pregnancies within their existing strategies and activities. Healthcare providers have always played a leadership role in the global discourse on health, healthcare and rights. They are **uniquely positioned to bear witness** to a range of sexual and reproductive health issues and rights violations that women suffer—ranging from forced sex to unwanted pregnancies to domestic violence.

Some highlights from this panel discussion:

Dr. Ea Mulligan, a medical practitioner from South Australia and an honorary senior lecturer in the Flinders University School of Medicine, Australia, explained that in order to convince doctors we need to use scientific facts. Thus, she equips herself with research to counter false claims and myths. Statistics like mortality due to unsafe abortions opens their eyes to importance to access to safe abortion.

Ann Furedi, with British Pregnancy Advisory Service, and **Dick Van der Tak**, from Global Doctors for Choice pointed out that doctors can address important issues such as late abortion with a **deeper insight** regarding medical consequences for the women. Dick also spoke about the importance of **forming a network** between such students and including important topics such as conscience objection and obstetric violence in the curriculum.

Aakarshan Timilsena, medical student Nepal, rightly stated that active collaborations between doctors and activists are essential and helped Nepal get liberal laws for abortion services.

Shreeya Mashelkar, medical student, India, explained that it's not going to be an easy path, with some people giving up when the going gets tough and lack of awareness among medical students. Shreeya also spoke about the **difficulty of taking moral decisions**, when as doctors you are expected to make judgements that could be life changing.

Session 9: Male feminists: Chimeras, Unicorns or Dragons?

Moderator: Anand Pawar Discussant: Robin Gorna

According to Greek mythology, the Chimera was a monstrous fire-breathing hybrid creature of Lycia in Asia Minor, composed of the parts of more than one animal. Unicorns as we know are lovable and pretty While appreciating the importance of male involvement in ensuring women's health and rights and for men to be potentially equal partners in dismantling the patriarchy, many feminists think that a male feminist is a contradiction and "for feminism to be successful as a philosophy and as a policy platform, it needs to stay undiluted by male appropriation. Mere espousal of or belief in the ideology of feminism doesn't automatically make one a feminist. For now, men are at best allies of feminism, not feminists per se."

Another school of thought says: "Their support of the women's movement does not erase the fact that they, on an individual level, are capable of harassing, assaulting, or silencing women—nor that, on a structural level, they continue to benefit from a system that establishes male dominance at the expense of women. And even though male allies may genuinely feel guilty,



they will continue to benefit from male privilege. The patriarchy does not offer special exceptions for men with good intentions. Male allies often undermine the very movement they claim to support because they fail to acknowledge the role that they themselves play in perpetuating female subordination. This is not to say that men can never be feminists—rather, that feminism should not cater to men."

We wanted to generate a positive discussion with the men who work with us in this movement about how they found themselves working for women's rights and that too for safe abortion rights. We also wanted to know about the challenges they have faced from other men when speaking out about this issue. What could be the genuine benefits of including more men in the movement and would that compromise spaces where women can speak up for themselves?

Anand started the session by saying that **male involvement in dismantling patriarchy is vital** and men could be the best allies of feminism but perhaps not feminist themselves. He asked the panel members to share their personal epiphany on this path. **Yu Yang,** China said that his thought and ideas about feminism had evolved over the years. Previously, due to the political environment in China he considered women power to have been a part of the communist revolution. But after joining ASAP, he understood that feminism was something different from patriotism and government led propaganda.

Dr. Gorakh G Mandrupkar, India said that his major transformation of his knowledge about feminism happened only after he started working with ASAP on the issues of sex selection and safe abortion issues.

Jon O'Brien, Catholics for Choice said that he believed feminism is women's space. Feminism is radical notion that women are people. He also said that what we are matters less than what we do and men don't need to be feminists to support the gender equality.

San Minh Hoang, Vietnam reflected that feminists are those who support the gender equality.so there should not be male/female feminists but just simply feminists! People should also be power sensitive and not just gender sensitive.

Suyash Khubchandani, India said that when they first started conducting the Youth Advocacy Institutes in their medical college there were very few male participants initially but now their number is gradually increasing. He thought that patriarchal socio-cultural practices are so normalized and taught to us from the time we are born that we do need some active orientation or training on gender and rights issues to realize that and to understand the role of men to contribute to making a change.



Dession 10: The revolution will not be funded. Or will it?

Panel on funding and global policy environment Moderator: Suchitra Dalvie

Panellists: Jocelyn Berger, International Women's Health Coalition; Yasmeen Qazi, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation; M Maria Diaz Ezquerro, FRIDA, The Young Feminist Funda; Liz Tremlett, Amplify Change; Robin Gorna, SheDecides; and Tehani Ariyaratne, South Asian Women's Fund.

This title is deliberately provocative and refers to the old song 'The revolution will not be televised'. It has recently been updated as "the revolution will not be tweeted'. Basically it refers to the fact that a genuine revolution will breakdown accepted means of communication/ channels as a part of the upheaval. It also seems to indicate that a revolution will happen only when people take to the streets and with live action.

In terms of the revolution we are referring to here, of course what we are trying to do is to challenge patriarchal and socio-cultural norms that control women's bodies and we want to revolutionize the way women have been controlled/ treated over these past centuries.



The reality seems to be that advocacy needs not just funding but in fact long term funding -investments and commitments, from both funders and grantees. Especially in Asia there is very insignificant domestic donor base. Even in countries where there are abortion services they are funded within family planning programmes, are sometimes coercive and there is no understanding of any rights based advocacy around it.

Donors hope to accomplish something by giving away their time and money. Yet in most situations, the "result" of any sort of philanthropy depends directly upon the performance of the nonprofit organizations on the receiving end. The donors on our panel are those who have built relationships with grantees and work in partnership with them, not just to move the agenda forward but also by actively supporting organizational development and alliance building. Transformational fundraising can only come from such reciprocal relationships.

Jocelyn Berger shard some updates on what the International Women's Health Coalition is doing regarding advocacy in response to the Gag Rule. IWHC is currently engaged in advocacy thorough research and are looking at ways to clarify and limit the effect, change the narratives to an ideological and evidence based one and to build a larger donor base and cross movement solidarity to increase the resistance against the gag rule. She did note that the outlook seems to be bleak and the rule has had a chilling effect beyond expected since organizations affected are either taking the most conservation position or are having to shut down.



Robin Gorna shared that She Decides was set up as a response to the Gag Rule. It has managed to garner 10 million Euros in funding mainly from Nordic countries and Canada among others. They have worked with politicians and civil society across the globe and she urged members of the audience to sign up for the She Decides pledge.

For many of us who work with any advocacy and especially abortion advocacy, a constant frustration is the short time frames within which grantees are expected to show significant change take place. Another concern is the lack of confirmed longer term funding that would allow one to plan and implement strategies in phases that can take account of how long it takes to shift policy or implementation or even community attitudes.

Yasmeen Qazi from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation reflected on this. She noted that the Foundation always encouraged bold and out of the box thinking. The Foundation has a deep personal connection to working on unsafe abortion issues and the work of ASAP is inspiring in this field.

Maria Ezquerro from FRIDA was asked to share her thoughts on the fact that our movement invests a lot of time and funds on building capacity and mentoring of young people who then eventually get jobs in other INGOs which can pay them a better salary. How can we as a movement retain these young people in order to build a critical mass? Maria agreed that this was indeed a genuine challenge and spoke of the tension between wanting to prevent 'NGO-ization' of the movement versus retaining people in paid positions to contribute to the movement. She spoke of the FRIDA fund itself as being one which is very supportive of people working as activists and without rigid organizational structures. They believe that having young leaders at the table and the front lines are critical for the resistance.

Liz Tremlett spoke on behalf of the since Amplify Change fund which was set up with one of its objectives being to support advocacy around safe abortion in Asia and Sub Saharan Africa. She spoke of the importance of working in these under- served areas.

Tehani Ariyaratne spoke about the importance of ensuring that women's voices are supported to speak up on behalf of women's issues. She also spoke about the newly expanded remit of SAWF which will include supporting work in South East Asia.

Jocelyn Berger concluded by suggesting that as a movement we should consider aligning with intersectional movements in order to strategize our funding options as well as the scope of our advocacy.

Session 11: I have a dream

Moderated by Smriti Thapa

Panellists: Ignatia Alfa Gloria, Shwetangi Shinde, Maneepunnarai Jiwjinda, Thant Aung Phyo, Zola Batkhuyag, Sarah Kadry Ahmed, Oveis Bazardeh

All of them spoke about how they dream of a world where we go beyond gender binaries and stereotypical narratives and where sex isn't shameful and where sex education, contraception and abortion are accessible to everyone.

Ignatia Alfa Gloria, is currently working with Indonesian Youth Champions to establish a youth advocacy network and with fellow SRHR activists in Indonesia to strengthen the Country Advocacy Network for safe and legal abortion, SAWG. She read out what would be 'A Letter to her Granddaughter.'



What inspiring words can I say to a roomful of people who have done so much to inspire me?

Kudos to you all who have carved out spaces in your environments to work and advocate for the safe abortion cause. Despite the opposition and apathy you've come up against, you've persisted and stayed true to what you believe to be right and just. That's incredibly difficult, but it's a feat that you've pulled off not just once but every single day.

Because you know that it is not right that a woman has to suffer the consequences of growing up in an environment where sex is stigmatized and not talked about.

Because you know that it is not right that a woman has no or restricted access to a safe abortion just because she happens to be born to one country and not another.

Thailand's Youth Champion chapter is still in its infancy stages, still crawling when its older siblings seem to be already walking and running.

But while that's the case, we share the same big dreams that you all do, of destigmatizing sex and of making abortion safe and accessible to all populations. We'll be joining you in this movement of turning our dreams into reality, and making the world that we live in a better and kinder place. There's no way to go but forward from here.

> Maneepunnarai Jiwjinda, a young medical student from Thailand

I want to start with my mother who is the inspiration of my life. She is the principal of the school and she has so many skills that I've learnt from her. She always stands for the rights, for the weak ones and empowers girls and women as much as she can. She made me who I am today.

When I was an intern at the Obstetrics and Gynecological ward, I witnessed the patients how they suffered from the complications of unsafe abortion. I still remember one case which is about a young woman, even younger than me. She received unsafe abortion from the quark and came to the hospital very late. Even though we had tried our best, she died from the complication of unsafe abortion with septicemia. I was very sad for her.

So, I tried to look for the solutions. Is it due to the poor socioeconomic status? Is it due to the lack of education? Is it due to no SRHR at all?

Yes, these are also the problems. But the main reason behind is that abortion is illegal in Myanmar. It is only allowed to save a woman's life. It also has a lot of stigma and taboo. People look at abortion as very bad thing. It is also regarded as murder because people believe life starts since conception.

In Myanmar, young people still don't have enough knowledge about SRHR. People feel shy to talk about it even in the family. Giving health education especially SRHR to the people especially to the young girls and adolescents is very important. Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) becomes vital role and to include CSE in school curriculums is what the government and youth are trying to do. There are a few health care providers who are doing medical abortion in Myanmar. Even

though misoprostol is not OTC drug in Myanmar, it is still available in very few medical stores. Menstrual regulation (MR) doing in Bangladesh is a good example. Even though MR itself is doing a safe abortion but the term is completely different. By this way, we can try to persuade people to accept safe abortion. Trying to involve young people especially young doctors in the process of safe abortion is important because doctors are agents of change.

I have a dream of one day when there is no stigma, taboo or restricted law about abortion in Myanmar. Abortion is every woman's rights. I stand for it. We stand for it.

> Thant Aung Phyo, an Assistant Civil Surgeon from Myanmar

I am coming from a city in north of Iran which has a great history of resistance and fight for freedom and equality. I have been grown up with the idea of endless battle until change;. At the same time, I believe that There is no freedom until the freedom of women. That;s why I started to chase the dream with my peers. Whenever i get tired, I read a piece of poem by Bertolt Brecht which is an invitation for following one's dream:

Instead of just being good, make an effort To create the conditions that make goodness possible, And better still That make it superfluous!

Instead of just being free, make an effort To create the conditions that liberate us all, And that make the love of freedom Superfluous!

Instead of just being sensible, make an effort To create the conditions that make the stupidity of the individual Into a bad deal!

> Oveis Bazardeh from Iran, co-founder and maintenance operator of the www.iransac.com website

Tribute to my Mother

I am who I am where I am and what I do, believe and for what I shall ever aspire to be is because I am the dream of Jamuna. The dream that Jamuna saw as child bride, widow as mother of only girl child in a society deeply entrenched in patriarchy, sexism and misogyny.

She never stopped dreaming ever when times were very harsh and critical and even when she felt like giving up. She dreamt any at times widows were ostracized, let alone were allowed to dream by the family members.

Yet she resisted, persisted and refused to her over her dream that her legacy will some day break the chain of pain and sufferings, stereotyping and stigma of being a widow and single mother of girl child.

In a country where dropout rate for the girl child in secondary education is high as 80% and child marriage greater than 37%. She not only refused to marry her daughter early despite the pressure of her in laws but also ensured the higher education of her girl child; the result of which my mom could push the boundaries to break the stereotypes and stigma surrounding working mom.

The ripple effect of which my mom could participate in equal gender power relation in home and also raise her son and daughter in gender neutral atmosphere. She raised her daughter not only to be part of someone else's dream but also to have a dream of her own.

The power of the dream this one woman saw. Faith in things unseen Courage to embrace fears The result is I could have this privilege of being who I am and what I am wanted to do things I am passionate about.

Moving forward the journey wasn't simple for me as well as, as young women and as youth SRHR activist. The stigma stereotyping and discrimination that stems from the patriarchal system is another barrier but despite the challenges of being an advocate for issues and rights which affects your own body has been incredibly gratifying. To be honest the growth has been tremendous both on personal and professional level. It has given me tremendous strength to stand against; professionally with seniors when they have taken Youth in tokenistic approach, job approaches that denies women's right to safe abortion; any colleague, acquaintances who stigmatizes SRHR; personally against relationship that is not based in equality; against people who discriminate you or in the basis of place of origin. It has given me opportunities to meet new people, be part of shared stories, facilitate young women in journey and share my experiences at spaces where growing up back in the small town of Nepal I could have never imagined to keep the knowledge and experience alive; more of the feminist values that are based on equality, respect and compassion for all.

Looking forward, I have of the feminist future, where women lived stories are heard and are taken into account when forming policies related to them, where all our revered in all its form and where universal access to SRHR are lived realities for all and not just part of developmental agendas.

Moving forward, we shall reflect upon the power of dream to share us their dream I have amazing panelist here in this session today that will not only reflect upon the dream but will share and inspire us to dream bigger for achieving gender just world.

Smriti Thapa

I have a dream that...

Although there is stigma, discrimination and challenges, if we will find the right way to express ourselves and the right channel, people will understand how is important the SRHR rights.

For instance, Women for Change organized and presented The Vagina Monologues play first time in Mongolia. That time, many people said it would be very extreme and tough topic to raise discussion, we believed in ourselves, we believed that gender based violence should be discussed openly. Otherwise people still think that domestic violence non-exists or it is family issue. So even the topic was taboo in our community, we used art (play) and it really helped the raise discussion around violence against women and girls. So we learned from that there is no perfect time to talk some topics, when it is harder to talk by that topic, maybe that is the right time to talk. Same as violence, abortion is taboo topic in Mongolia.

Abortion and other contraceptives are legal in Mongolia. Even though it is legal still we have stigma and discrimination around the SRHR issues. Even though it is legal women can't have access to safe and quality abortion that is affordable. It depends who you are, where are you from and how much money you have. Especially in remote or rural areas young women are shamed to ask or demand for reproductive services. Service providers see it as service not a right. We must work to change that.

I have a dream that everyone, every women and young person have a right to demand and pursue access to comprehensive SRHR throughout their life.

Zolzaya Batkhuyag

Dear my future granddaughter,

When you read this, it remarks IOO years since I wrote this. So, I'm pretty sure you are not seeing me around anymore. Well, it just an intuition that I might be have a granddaughter one day, but if it's not, I wish this letter could be received by a brave girl out there.

I'm sure right now you and the girls around already able to enjoy the fulfillment of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. Be thankful because you can get a youth friendly services where you can asking for a contraception, get pap smear, or get abortion without the healthcare provider asking about your marital status. Because in the current time, even buying a condom will be a very uncomfortable experience, since people will always looks at you as surprise as you buying a unicorn. Well, it might be funny for you, but it's real!

Be thankful because you can get the highest education as you want, without people judging you as 'imperfect' women because you are not married yet. Be thankful because you can choose when and with whom you want to be married. In the current time, some girls forced to married on their 13th; girls who get raped forced to be married with their rapist in the sake of "not embarrassing the family"; women and girls who get pregnant because of rape couldn't get abortion, because no matter what, majority said that a fetus is a precious living creature, well, I don't know if they also think the same towards the women who feel suffering due to their unintended pregnancy. Due to this condition, many girls and women forced to burry their dream, and likely ended up in the abusive relationship.

Be thankful because you can express your love freely, no matter what is your sexual orientation. Because in the current situation at the country where I growing up, the government tried to criminalized LGBT. Can you guess the reason? Majority group think that LGBT is a thread to the nation, LGBT will broke down the country resilience. I don't know in what why woman and woman who love and encourage each other, consider to be more threatening than terrorist or corruptors? I just don't get it, so don't ask me why our government make this assumption. Besides LGBT, government also try to interfere our private space. Right now, we are facing the penal code which state "the man and woman who are living together or act like a married couple, meanwhile they are not legally married, should be criminalized". Don't you think it's ridiculous? How can we judge a man and woman is already married or not? I think, the government doesn't realized that the jail already full enough, without this revision of law.

Be thankful because you can wear whatever you want Because in the current time, the woman who wear less called whore and the women who covered themselves called unattractive.

Do you know what keep me sane in the current time? Because I'm privileged enough to find information and found my support group. I found mentors, badass women, and group full of passionate people who never tired to fight for human's right. One of them, is ASAP. I wish that in IOO years, ASAP will no longer exist. Don't get me wrong, I love this network so much and it's very close to my heart. But, it's only mean that women's right already fulfill meaningfully and women can gets safe abortion no matter of their status. Because I'm sure, as long as these right not fulfilled yet, ASAP will always be there to fight for it. Why I said so? Because we just too stubborn to be stopped. We will never give up.

I wish, you also find the family which not build by blood but by the same passion and aim. Because I tell you, if you get surrounded by this passionate and positive people, it will give you power. And trust me, the magic will happen.

Ps: I also inserted some pictures, as a reminder that the struggle was long and not easy. If you're privileged enough to live comfortably, please step back and look around, there might be girls somewhere who struggling to fight for their rights. Don't speak for her, but do speak with her. And one more thing, don't forget to always love yourself, because you are matter and you are enough.

Love, Your badass-to-be grandma.

Ignatia Gloria

Shwetangi Shinde, a medical student from Mumbai, India, summed up the session by sharing their collective idea of a world where a woman's sexuality no longer belongs to her husband, her opinion of herself to the social circles and her uterus to the Government and where women could do anything that men could but could also, when and if they choose to - bear children.

The session ended with all the speakers and the moderator holding hands as a symbol of their unity and strength in creating the world that they have imagined along with Shwetangi reading out a poem "I am not a liberal snowflake" by Houston Kraft.

I AM NOT A LIBERAL SNOWFLAKE. MY FEELINGS AREN'T FRAGILE, MY HEART ISN'T BLEEDING.

I AM A BADASS BELIEVER IN HUMAN RIGHTS. MY TOUGHNESS IS IN TENDERNESS. MY STRENGTH IS IN THE SERVICE OF OTHERS. THERE IS NOTHING MORE FIERCE THAN FORMIDABLE, UNCONDITIONAL LOVE. THERE IS NOT A THING MORE COURAGEOUS THAN COMPASSION.

BUT IF MY BELIEF IN EQUITY, EMPATHY, GOODNESS, AND LOVE INDEED MAKES ME OR PEOPLE LIKE ME SNOWFLAKES, THEN YOU SHOULD KNOW -WINTER IS COMING.

Closing session

After the two days of exhilaration and inspiration, learning, solidarity, sharing and fun, it was sadly time to say goodbye!

Sarah Soysa, Yu Yang, Thao Vi Nguyen, Nikzad Zangeneh and Zainab Engineer proposed a Conference declaration which we could share with all partners and members and key stakeholders.



CONFERENCE DECLARATION The Power of Partnership

Celebrating 10 years of movement building for Safe Abortion Advocacy

Bangkok, Thailand || February 24th-25th, 2018

We have gathered here at the "The Power of Partnership: Celebrating 10 years of movement building for Safe Abortion Advocacy" event in Bangkok on the 24th and 25th of February 2018. Although a diverse group of activists, advocates, and sexual and reproductive health (SRHR) professionals, we are united by our understanding that safe abortion is a fundamental human right of women and is unavoidable, essential, and is key to advancing gender equality and in recognizing sexual and reproductive health and rights. We are committed to

- forging partnerships to work together for gender, sexual and reproductive, economic, and social justice and political transformation,
- achieving the goal of ensuring safe, legal abortion access as part of comprehensive sexual and
- reproductive health services

 ensuring that all women regardless of age, ethnicity, gender identity, geographic location, marital status, race, religion, socio-economic status or migration status have access to their sexual and reproductive health and rights

to make further progress toward gender equality.

Recognising that change in national policy can be supported through consistent, international, feminist activism, over the past ten years the Asia Safe Abortion Partnership has taken progressive steps to strengthen youth-led country networks, ensure that the discourse of gender equality includes and addresses women's right to safe abortion, and provide intergenerational mentorship. This has helped deliver effective local and national advocacy campaigns that challenge gender discrimination and discriminatory laws against women in Asia, and seek to hold governments and communities accountable. Youth activism has played a critical role in the rise of movements working for gender justice throughout the years. It is vital that we support and empower young feminist leaders, especially women, and enable them to claim their rights, make their own choices, and access the services that they need.

We reaffirm

- That access to safe and legal abortion is an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of human rights of women.
- The need to ensure comprehensive access to safe abortion and defend women's bodily autonomy in policy, practice, and funding.
- Our recognition of the central role that SRHR plays in health equity, human rights, and development, while ensuring the inclusion of these rights in all national policies and emergency response strategies.
- That the participation and contribution of all stakeholders, including both civil society and government, are
 important for the effective implementation and advancing safe and legal abortion.

We call on

- Legislators to push for rights and evidence based legislations; and repeal discriminatory laws and policies, such as
 those that criminalize safe abortion, including spousal and parental consent for accessing abortion services, and laws
 that criminalize individuals on the basis of age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, sexual
 practices, HTV status and transmission, and labor choices, including sex work.
- Healthcare providers to ensure that all SRHR-related service provision is youth, adolescent and women friendly, and to provide accessible spaces which deliver needs based services in a sensitive, holistic, non-stigmatizing and nondiscriminatory manner.
- Advocates and activists to encourage South-South capacity building and cooperation towards ensuring meaningful
 participation of civil societies and individuals especially young women in all actions advancing safe and legal
 abortion.
- Governments and donors to recognise and ensure that priorities for the post-2015 global development framework incorporate safe, legal and accessible abortion as an integral component of gender equality and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- Educators to implement Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) as a cross-cutting component, to respect and guarantee the rights of all young people and to push for programmes that are receptive to youth needs and efforts intensifying supportive policies and financial commitments.
- States to ensure the provision of youth friendly, accessible, affordable and comprehensive SRHR services to all
 young people; including youth living in or fleeing from fragile and humanitarian/emergency settings.

We, as members of the Asia Safe Abortion Partnership network - as Youth Champions, mentors, partners and peers pledge, individually and collectively to mobilize our knowledge, resources and networks toward achieving these goals. We call on the global, regional and sub-regional community to join us in holding governments, institutions and donors accountable for respecting women's rights to make choices when faced with unwanted and unplanned pregnancies, and to fulfill their obligations to women.

Bonita Sharma and Aasutosh Karki had been working on a short video of highlights of the conference and the audience was amazed at the perfect capturing of the fun and intense moments of the two days. The video received a standing ovation.



We would like to thank **each and every one** of you for joining us in this celebration!

We want to thank our **Steering Committee members, past and present,** for their constant support and cooperation. We want to thank **Dr Thuy** who could not be here but has been a rock and a rockstar in guiding our work over these years!

A special thanks to **Dr Unnop Jaisamram** who helped us with many of the local logistics arrangements. Thank you also to **Tik and Chompoo** for the same.

We also want to thank **Dr Choong** who has offered to support a travel fellowship for one Youth Champion every year for the next 3 years. We will share more details in the coming months.

We thank the **David and Lucile Packard Foundation** and the **International Women's Health Coalition** for supporting us in making this conference happen, not just through financial support but being with us as supportive partners also. We would like to once again thank **Jocelyn and Yasmeen** for their presence and guidance during these days.

We thank **all our partners and allies** who are walking shoulder to shoulder with us as we build this regional movement. A special thanks and welcome to some of our **newer partners** who will hope will stay connected and work with us in the future.

We thank **every Youth Champion** who is here and all those who are supporting us in spirit (and on social media). But they have juggled full time jobs, studies, exams and much more and delivered on their responsibilities with flying colours!

Every one of the YCs here has been working hard for months on the agenda, stalls, declaration, presentations, participant booklet and so much more. This would not have been possible without any of you! Thank you!







for their support in organizing this conference.

We also thank







AMPLIFYCHANGE





for their support over the last 10 years and beyond.







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