

QUARTERLY REPORT

JANUARY – MARCH 2019

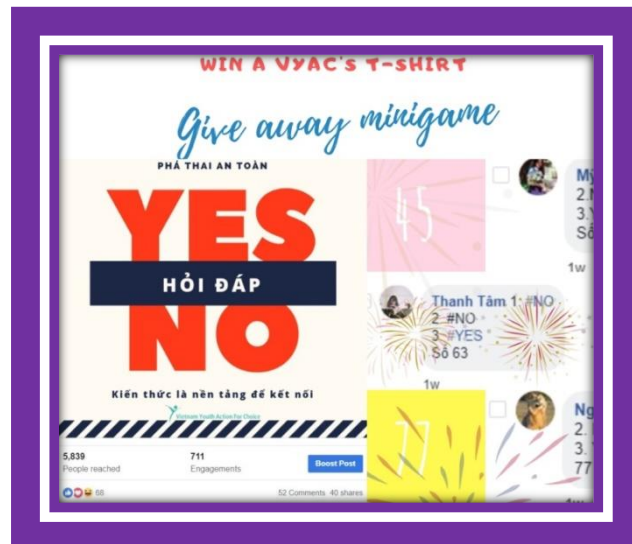
Greetings from the Asia Safe Abortion Partnership!

It gives us immense pleasure to give you a quick peek into what we've been working on these last few months here at the Asia Safe Abortion Partnership. We are also proud to share with you our [Annual Report](#) for 2018, which can also be accessed on our [website](#).

VYAC Mini game on Facebook / January 5th - 13th / Online

As a follow-up activity after a Live-stream to discuss anti-abortion movement in Vietnam last December 2018, VYAC created a Give Away Mini game with three True/False questions about safe abortion. [VYAC's Facebook](#) followers were encouraged to share their answers with a lucky number from 0 to 100 in the comment section. On January 13th, VYAC used Random.org to randomly select three luckiest people amongst those who had given correct answers to give away VYAC's t-shirt with a #vajoyna #happenis slogan. The mini game reached 5,839 people, engaged 711 people, and got 52 people answering three questions about safe abortion:

- True or False? Abortions cause infertility and psychological problems.
- True or False? Only irresponsible young people need abortions.
- True or False? Prohibition of abortion is not a solution to end this phenomenon.



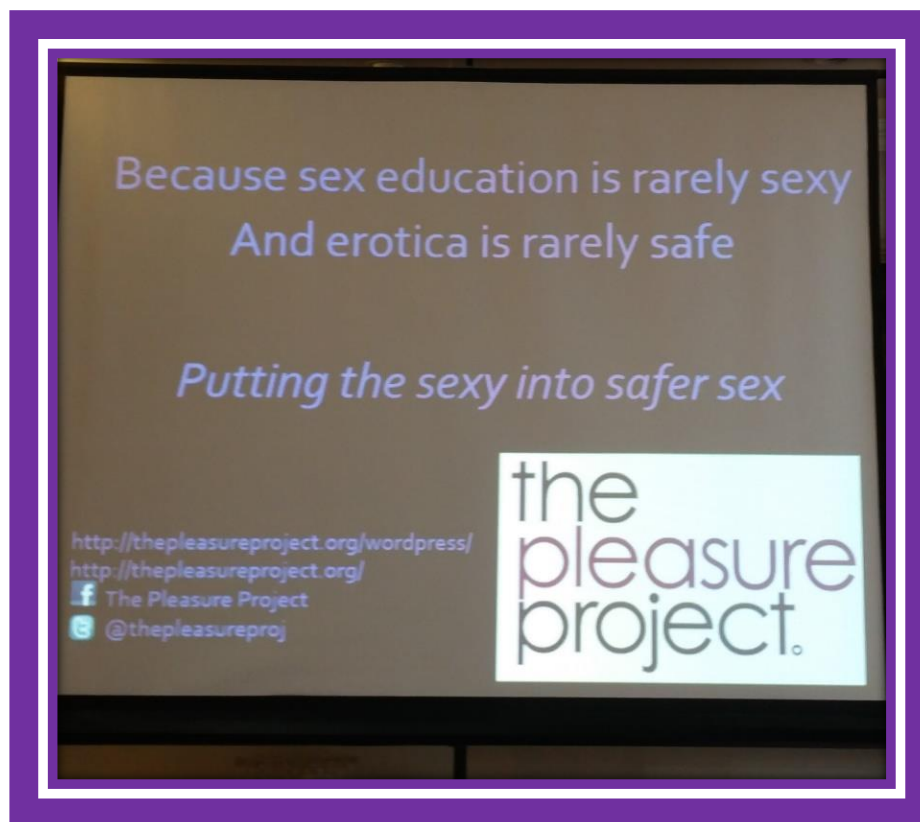
VYAC BridgeFest 2019 / January 13rd, 2019 / Ha Noi, Vietnam

BridgeFest 2019 - the fourth "Bridging the Gap" music festival, was co-organized by Oxfam in Vietnam and the US Embassy in Vietnam, aimed to break down barriers, such as gender, income,

physical ability, geography, culture and religion, to promote equality and connect people. VYAC held a booth at BridgeFest 2019 and reached nearly 1000 youths. At the event, we:

- Invited youth to answer SRHR quiz, engage VYAC's FB page, and receive VYAC's t- shirt with a #vaoyna #happenis slogan
- Explained how period cycle, and how contraceptives work. - Demonstrated how to use female condom
- Gave away stickers with slogans about #MyDecisionMyChoice #MyBodyMyRights #TrustYourchoiceTrustyourself

'Sexual Pleasure: The forgotten link in sexual and reproductive health and rights' toolkit workshop | 12th - 13th January 2019 | Mumbai, India



ASAP collaborated with [Love Matters India](#) and the Pleasure Project in Mumbai for a workshop on sexual pleasure which spanned over 2 days and was attended by the ASAP staff and Youth Champions. The workshop covered important issues like the importance and difference between sexuality, sexual rights and sexual health. Love Matters introduced an interesting tool kit called the 'Pleasure Meter' which can help service providers/counsellors in better understanding their client's sexual life, in terms of pleasure, consent and overall mental and physical satisfaction. Pleasure Project talk touched upon issues like what really can be acceptable or unacceptable in sexual pleasure while also delving into risk based approach vs pleasure based approach, by comparative examples.

ASAP Coordinator Dr Suchitra Dalvie discussed case studies with the participants that helped them understand on how best to take the pleasure approach. She also addressed the service provider's perspective by explaining it through an activity where everyone was paired as a

doctor and a client and they had to overcome their fear of asking embarrassing questions while being non-judgemental towards your client.

A brief Introduction to feminism, comprehensive sexuality education and Safe Abortion / 26th January 2019 / Thimphu, Bhutan

Organized by our Youth Champions from the Country Advocacy Network (CAN) of Bhutan; [D-YISA](#) this workshop was organized for a mix of class 12th and a few medical students who had never before been a part of an extensive SRHR focused discussion. At the session they talked about the difference between gender and sex after which moved on to define toxic masculinity and how it affects other genders. They talked extensively about abortion rights in Bhutan.

They touched upon the term feminism, which many participants hadn't heard of before and talked about how it means equality for all, but is mostly considered a movement for women because it is the women at large who have suffered or suffering the most in the world.

Additionally D-YISA along with RainboWoMen,(their local partner) have also come up with an **IG page called "[Feminism in Bhutan](#)"** and are trying to take the message of 'equality for all' and the importance of reproductive rights of women to the youth of Bhutan.



Leadership and Competency Workshop / 16th – 18th February, 2019 / Bangkok, Thailand

This workshop was organized with the aim of improving the leadership capabilities of the ASAP CAN leaders through improved mentoring and leadership. The DiSC psychometric profiling was carried out for ASAP CAN team leaders and key staff.

This coaching has provided the foundations to accelerate the participants' development as leaders through raising their awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses, and the differing capabilities, motivations and communication preferences of others.



International Congress on Women's Health and Unsafe Abortion (IWAC) | 19th – 22nd February 2019/ Bangkok, Thailand

This year the 4th International Congress on Women's Health and Unsafe Abortion, was organized by the Women's Health and Reproductive Rights Foundation of Thailand at Bangkok from 19th- 22nd February 2019 focussing on the important 5Ds when it comes to Universal Access to Safe Abortion, which are; Desensitization; De-Stigmatization; De-medicalization; Decentralization and finally Decriminalization.

Eminent speakers shared their knowledge and opinions on the issue of abortion rights, from different parts of the world. ASAP was well represented at the conference by Steering Committee members and staff as well as many of our Youth Champions who have been working towards making SRHR more equal and accessible for women in their respective countries and addressing relevant challenges that that need to be delved upon.

Access to contraception among educated urban youth- YC Anika Binte Habib, Bangladesh (Co-Lead Youth AID)

Anika talked about the study conducted by [Youth-Aid](#) in Bangladesh that attempted to contribute and add knowledge on the situation, perception and policy option required in this field along with assessing the educated urban youth's access to contraception in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Building support for sexual violence survivors through community based education – YC Ignatia Alpha Gloria and Vicky Rosarie, Indonesia

34% of violence against women cases –that reported- is sexual violence and at least 1 in 3 women experience sexual violence In their life time. Based on this this information their team decided to conduct mini



workshops with around 350 people from diverse backgrounds and ages, to understand their knowledge and attitude with regards to sexual violence. They included that comprehensive education on sexual violence needs to be regularly held to create spaces for clarification and confirmation, to widen the supporting groups, and to build sense of urgency for further advocacy national level.

Advocacy for attitude change among future healthcare professionals; Wangchuk Dema, Bhutan

Around 200 women and girls die every year in Bhutan due to unsafe abortions. Youth Champions from [DRUK- YISA](#) conducted an advocacy meet with the students of Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan and were surprised to find that almost 300 medical students despite being trained as healthcare providers, were not aware that abortion is fairly legal and therefore It seemed like an opportunity to clarify the legal status of abortion in the country. The students were surveyed on whether abortion should be completely legalized or not and 68.8% said yes, while 27.8% said no and rest 3.3% were neutral.

Gender Perspective and Training in Medical Education; Suyash Khubchandani, India (Co-founder of ISAY)

Given the critical role that healthcare providers play in either being a barrier or a support to women who seek sexual and reproductive health services along with upholding or denying them their rights, ASAP has been working closely with some medical students. They now have their own network called [ISAY](#)

Till now they have organized 7 sensitization workshops panning 150 students which were a mix of conversations, discussions and activities on issues surrounding gender, sexuality, barriers to safe abortion with an aim to provide a wholesome understanding of a right's based approach.

Some other topics covered by our members

- *Embedding Abortion into SRHR via Sexuality Hotline- Rola Yasmine Lebanon*
- *Value Clarification and Attitudinal Transformation – an approach to overcoming barriers to abortion services in a conservative context- Naureen Farhan Suranii Pakistan*
- *Conflict in Young People's Sexual Life- Phan Bich Thuy, Vietnam*
- *Abortion Myths and Perceptions: Findings from an online survey- Dr Souvik Pyne*
- *Abortion Access: Women's Rights vs Religious Political Partnerships – S P Choong, Malaysia*
- *Secularism, Sexual Rights and the Youth- S P Choong*
- *Using Post Abortion Care in Afghanistan to save lives- Katayon Sadat, Afghanistan*
- *Mapping women- sex ratios and the right to safe abortion- Garima Shrivastava*
- *Creating Youth Champions through Advocacy Institutes- Suchitra Dalvie*
- *Strategies for introducing abortion into practitioner training - Suchitra Dalvie*

Self-Managed Abortions Global Meeting IWHC | 24th – 26th Feb, 2019 | Bangkok, Thailand

ASAP Coordinator Dr Suchitra Dalvie was invited to be a part of this meeting and attended on behalf of ASAP. The meeting objective was to develop a more dynamic understanding of self-managed abortion across informal practices and formal systems to:

- Better support and meet the needs of all people seeking abortions
- Improve the design of interventions for health systems, laws and policies
- Evolve dominant paradigms and discourses about self-managed abortions and
- Reflect on existing and propose potential new research and advocacy goals.

During the various sessions held over three days the participants mapped the continuum of practices in self-managed abortion (SMA) across formal and informal sectors, including who are some of the actors and what are their philosophies of practice. They also discussed how people access information, medicines and support and what are their realities and needs.

Today [She Decides](#) Flagship Event / 1st- 3rd March, 2019 / Kathmandu, Nepal

SheDecides in collaboration with ARROW and IPPF organized this flagship event on 1st March 2019 in Kathmandu, in cooperation with ARRO's partner Beyond Beijing Committee and UNFPA. Nepal was chosen in recognition of the important work the government and civil society are doing to enable women to decide about their health and own bodies. ASAP was represented by our Youth Champions Desaree Soysa from Sri Lanka, Anika Binte Habib from Bangladesh and Yadanar from Myanmar. It was a milestone moment when the 25x25 of SheDecides were revealed. 25x25 brings together 25 young advocates from 25 countries around the world who have contributed to the sexual and reproductive rights of their respective countries or regions.



International Women's Day 2019-: #IMakeHistory Campaign / 8th Feb- 8th March, 2019

This year ASAP decided combined Women's History Month and International Women's Day, to celebrate our Youth Champions, especially women who have been working towards safe abortion rights across Asia and their contribution to the movement as doctors, students, lawyers, trainers and other capacities. We launched a campaign called [#IMakeHistory](#). The idea behind it was to celebrate those who are making history every day, ranging from the smallest task of sharing a social media post to increase awareness around safe abortion rights, to conducting research, writing articles and organizing events. All of these contribute to the growing regional and global movement for women's right to safe abortion.



Partnership also posted an [#AbortionSong](#) that was created by our YC Asmita Ghosh and was a spoof of a popular English song. We received a good response to the video with more than 500 views in just 3 days.

Health Over Stigma Report Launch on 'Stigma unmarried women face when accessing sexual and reproductive health services' / 21st February, 2019 / New Delhi, India



Lack of enough data on experiences of women with regards to their reproductive choices and the stigma faced on an everyday basis, makes the cause of SRHR a neglected one among the policy and law makers of the country. Haiyya a grassroots organization conducted a survey with 796 unmarried women in Delhi, under their campaign called Health Over Stigma and shared their findings. For instance it was revealed that 83.4% unmarried women access internet for information on SRHR, while only 20% knew about the abortion law in India. This data is alarming as it indicates that sexual health issues are not considered serious enough for a majority of women and often internet seems to be the last resort for many, which may not always be reliable. This launch was attended by the communications officer of ASAP, Ayesha and was also an opportunity to collaborate for the second phase of their campaign, focussing on service providers.

Debriefing on Leadership Development Workshop and 4th IWAC 2019 / 9th March, 2019 / D-YISA, Bhutan

After three members of D-YISA, namely Manita Rai, Ugyen Dema and Wangchuk Dema (coordinator) attended the Leadership Competency Development Workshop in Bangkok, Thailand last month from February 17th -19th, they decided to share their experiences with the rest of the members of the country advocacy network. Additionally they also briefly debriefed the members on the 4th International Congress on Women's Health and Unsafe Abortion which was attended by Ugyen Dema and Wangchuk Dema. They also opened the conversation around abortion in the country on how the need is to sensitize the existing conditional laws on abortion

in the country as hardly anybody knows about it, and lastly specifically aimed at the medical students present, the importance of creating awareness that health service providers have a huge and important role in making safe abortion (services) in the country completely legal and available.

First Sensitization Programme with Online Participants of Instagram Page 'Feminism in Bhutan' / 10th March, 2019 / D-YISA, Bhutan

In recognizing "International Women's Day" which was on March 8th, D-YISA brought some Instagram followers of "Feminism in Bhutan" together today (10th March) to mark the day. Besides that, it was also the first ever sensitization program of about 4 hours for the participants since the page was only recently created in January this year. "Feminism in Bhutan" came up about an aim of online sensitization and campaign on feminism, Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) including safe abortion, comprehensive sexuality education, gender based violence including sexual harassment and assault, LGBTQI+ especially transwomen, people with disability and sexuality, fight against climate change, women in politics, Self-Care, Sexuality of all genders, masturbation and other topics or issues that are hardly talked or discussed (seriously) about.

VYAC Movie Talk 3 / March 10th, 2019 / Hai Phong, Vietnam

VYAC held a screening of the new TV show, only available on Netflix called- Sex Education which is a British comedy-drama, filmed in the rolling hills of the Wye Valley straddling the border between England and Wales, but it sports heady, American cologne straight out of the 80s. One of the biggest messages the TV show has is during episode 3 where Maeve gets an abortion and that's why VYAC chose the episode 3 of season 1 to share with audiences. We also collaborated with GIVOLOGY club of Tran Phu high-school in Hai Phong to reach out more people. At the result, the number of registered participants who knows the event via friends and another network increased 16%.

Multi Sector Dialogue on Reproductive Rights of Persons with Disabilities / 17th March, 2019 / Quetta, Pakistan

Our newest Youth Champion and disability rights activist Zarghoona Wadood organized this event with an aim of discussing the Reproductive Rights of person with disabilities within the Cultural norms of the Quetta with the indirect objective of Education on Safe abortion and Marriage issues of



Person with Disabilities. 20 participants from the Disable Community was invited and 35 from the Civil Society including Media personals.

By the end of the workshop, facilitators recommended that more people with disabilities should come forward and fight for their rights. Participants were also recommended to pursue the government policies and take more advocacy initiatives.

India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates – Youth Advocacy Institute / 29th – 31st March / Maharashtra, India



ISAY organized a YAI with 16 medical students. As always the agenda primarily focussed on the stigma attached to abortion in the country, the role patriarchy has to plays towards enabling this culture and how they as future service providers can break this norm, by being more sensitive and non-judgemental.

Youth Advocacy Institute for Development Worskhop / 30th March, 2019 / Barishal, Bangladesh



Youth AID conducted their first ever workshop with young women from the Dalit community regarding the importance of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and Menstrual Regulation. The workshop was co-led by our Youth Champion Anika Binte Habib.