



The Asia Safe Abortion Partnership Annual Report 2013

Meet The ASAP Team

Steering Committee:

SP Choong
Malaysia

Ninuk Widyantoro
Indonesia

Phan Bich Thuy
Vietnam

Milind Shah
India

Rola Yasmine
Lebanon

Staff:

Suchitra Dalvie
Coordinator

Shilpa Shroff
Assistant
Coordinator,

Shweta Krishnan
Communications and
Networking Officer

Sunita Mungekar
Accounts Officer

Charmaine
Kolwalkar
Admin Assistant

From The Desk Of The Coordinator:

Nothing is permanent but change! While change is distressing for those in the comfort zone and in positions of power, for those who are disenfranchised and deprived of their rights, change is the promise of a better life and a real future.

We continued working in 2013 with all our dedicated, enthusiastic and committed members across 15 countries to strive for the change we hope to see—the right to safe abortion and the access to safe abortion services for women and girls in all our countries.

We need to create a critical mass of people who understand safe abortion as a human rights issue, not only from among the community but also from policymakers, media and health care providers. We conducted workshops for young advocates and doctors, nurses and counselors and planned small grants projects with them, to empower them to be change agents within their own spheres of influence.

Changes in the law, attitudes and services will not happen overnight and we need to keep building the strength of our movement so that it can persevere across generations. With this in mind we have reached out to others working for this issue and built partnerships and collaborations within the region and with young people in particular.

As we look back on 2013 what we will remember is the brave and angry voices that are increasingly speaking up and speaking out and saying it is ENOUGH! We need to stop the injustice and discrimination and violation of rights and women need the right to safe abortion NOW!

THE ONES
WHO ARE
CRAZY ENOUGH
TO THINK THEY
CAN CHANGE
THE WORLD

ARE THE ONES
THAT DO



ASAP Celebrates

5

Years Of
Advocacy
In March 2013

Background:

Asia has the world's largest population and the highest number of unsafe abortions -- 10.8 million each year, according to the Population Review Bureau survey in 2011.

Asia has a disproportionately large number of young people who will bear the burden of these unsafe abortions in the coming years.

Studies show that currently 2 out of 5 unsafe abortions occur in women below 25 years.

Who Are We?

The Asia Safe Abortion Partnership was formed in March 2008 and is a regional affiliate of the International Consortium for Medical Abortion (ICMA).

ASAP serves as a strategic think-tank in Asia and conducts activities to promote women's right to safe abortion.

Goal:

To promote, protect and advance women's sexual and reproductive rights by reducing unsafe abortions and its complications, and by promoting access to comprehensive safe abortion services in the Asia region.

Objectives:

- To serve as a forum for information and strategic thinking and planning for a collective vision aimed towards international and national advocacy.
- To support members through capacity building, law, advocacy and policy; research and documentation; and service delivery.
- To promote new technologies including medical abortion and manual vacuum aspirations.

ASAP is one the co-founders of the International Campaign For Women's Right To Safe Abortion.



Current Challenges:

- Religious fundamentalism and political conservatism prevent the liberalization of laws
- Women's rights and human rights not ensured
- Funding constraints compared to anti-choice groups
- Inadequate government accountability towards international covenants.



We designed a heat map plotting ASAP's activities over the last 5 years

See The Interactive Map here:

<https://asiasafeabortionpartnership.crowdmap.com/>

Key Organizational Events



2nd General Body Meeting, May 31 Kuala Lumpur:

16 other General Body members and a donor representative attended. Youth Champions and Hotline Partners presented their reports.

Steering Committee Meetings:

1. Bangkok, January 2013:

Steering Committee Member **Indira Basnett**, who helped with ASAP's Mid-level Provider Exchange Study Programme in 2012 rotated off.

2. Kuala Lumpur, May 2013:

- Steering Committee Member **Khalid Qureshi**, who supported the hotlines in Pakistan, rotated off.
- Youth Champion **Rola Yasmine** was invited to join the committee.
- **Ninuk Widiantoro** was elected to take over as Chair from January 2014.

Overview Of Achievements

Visibility and Networking



ASAP Staff, Steering Committee Members and Youth Champions participated in:

- The Second International Women's Health and Safe Abortion Conference (IWAC), Bangkok, Thailand
- The 57th UN Commission on the Status of Women, New York, USA
- Women Deliver, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- UNESCAP – 6th Asia Pacific Population Conference, Bangkok, Thailand
- ICPD Beyond 2014 - Expert Meeting on Women's Health, Mexico City, Mexico

The Communication and Networking Officer attended the **CEHAT Health and Human Rights Course, Mumbai, India**

IWAC



Women Deliver



UNESCAP



ASAP along with the Center For Reproductive Rights, Women on Web, Gynuity, The International Consortium for Medical Abortion and the Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights conducted a panel on **The International Campaign for Women's Right To Safe Abortion** its history, its objectives and the possible collaborations for the right to safe abortion.

ASAP Coordinator was invited to speak at the MSI debate "Is the Global Health Community On The Right Track To Achieve Reproductive Health and Rights."

ASAP conducted an Asia-Pacific Strategy Meeting to plan for the International Day For Action For Safe And Legal Abortion (Sept 28, 2013)

IWHC supported the participation of four youth champions nominated by ASAP:

- Lady Lisondra from The Philippines
- Yu Yang from China
- Shreejana Bajracharya from Nepal
- Nikzad Zangeneh from Iran.

They also visited a local abortion clinic, facilitated by Ms. Supecha who manages a Misoprostol hotline based in Bangkok.

Social Media Updates:

The ASAP Listserve has over 300 members from over 20 countries in the Asia Pacific and the Middle East.

ASAP provides information to women seeking safe abortion by email and on private Facebook messages.

An SEO audit showed that the ASAP Facebook Page ranks No. 1 among pages in its niche.

Starting in June 2012, ASAP has had a robust online presence through its website, listserve, Facebook, Twitter and Blog. In addition, the organization also has had a YouTube page with original videos, and a newsletter to share information with its wide audience.

The ASAP Website:

The ASAP had launched its re-designed website www.asap-asia.org in May 2012.

The website homepage has:

- A map of Asia that links to country profiles, which give an overview of the abortion law, policy and data in member countries.
- A pregnancy calculator
- Information on safe abortion which can be translated using Google translator into 9 Asian languages
- Videos
- Links to hotlines for safe abortion.
- The website is also smart phone downloadable.

The website had over 7067 visits in 2013



The ASAP Blog

The ASAP launched its blog www.asap-asia.org/blog/ in June 2012.

Starting in 2013 the blog has four regular monthly columns:

- Word Of the Month
- Country Of the Month
- Quote Of The Month
- Person Of The Month

The website has had over 15,000 visits in total

Words Discussed In 2013

Stigma, Misogyny, Patriarchy, Feminism, Hegemony, Subversion, Personal is Political, Illegal, Advocacy, Personhood, Access and Ideology

Twitter Updates:



Join Over 700 Followers at www.twitter.com/asapasia

The ASAP Blog

Prochoice Discussions From Asia



Understanding The Updated WHO Safe Abortion Technical and Policy Guidance

Posted on December 5, 2013 by Shweta Krishnan

The Asia Safe Abortion Partnership conducted a workshop for understanding the updated WHO Safe Abortion: Technical and Policy Guidance For Health Systems between Tuesday 3rd - Thursday 5th December, 2013 at the Bong Sen Hotel, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.



The ASAP Coordinator and steering committee members conducted sessions on the process for development of the 2nd edition of the Safe Abortion Guidance, safe abortion as a human rights and public health issue, and clinical care for women undergoing abortion. There was a values clarification exercise and a session to share experiences from the participant's countries.

The workshop also included a visit to the Tu Du Hospital with Dr. Tuyet, who is Director of the Hospital, and Dr. Yen who is Head of the family planning Department. The participants also had an opportunity to hear about the misoprostol hotline run by Chompoo, a participant from Bangkok, in collaboration with [Women on Web](#).



Subscribe



Polls

Do We Need Feminism?

- Yes! We need gender equality!
- No! Traditional roles are important to preserve family.
- Maybe! But I don't like being a feminist
- Yes! It's time women took over from men!
- No! All the battles are won, and women are now equal!

View Results

Read more about safe abortions on our website

Browse Our Archives:

- Access
 - Abortion Providers
 - Abortion Stigma
 - Adolescents
 - Affordability
 - Laws
 - Safe Abortion
 - Hotlines
- Advocacy
 - Best /Worst Of The Year
 - Collaborations
 - New / Social Media
 - Separating Abortion From Sex-Selection
 - Youth Advocates
- All Categories
 - Campaigns
 - International Campaign For

Highlights:

- Shared information on where to get abortion, information about medical abortion, laws on safe abortion across Asia, hotline numbers.
- Other posts include news stories on abortion, editorials and blogs.
- Highlights: Networking through Twitter has helped procure scholarship for Youth Champion to attend Women Deliver, to share accurate information with journalists and to help fellow pro-choice organizations spread accurate information, and to support organizations against anti-choice attacks.

Events Held On Twitter:

- Tweet Fest For One Billion Rising with Bell Bajao and TARSHI
- Global Tweetathon for Sept. 28, The International Day Of Action For Safe and Legal Abortion.

Facebook Updates:

Join over 550 followers at www.facebook.com/asiasafeabortionpartnership

The total people the posts reach range from 600 to 2300 through the year. Through them the posts reach up to 100,000 people.

Demographics:

- 64% of the total followers are women.
- 74% of the total people the posts reached are women.
- 90% of the people who interact with the posts are women.

Top 5 Asian Countries To View Page:

- India,
- Nepal,
- Indonesia,
- Malaysia
- Myanmar



Special Highlight: It's Her Right Campaign

Run by ASAP Youth Champions From Sri Lanka



2 New Videos on YouTube

1. Rights Of A Sex Worker: featuring Michael Babu Raj of Karnataka Public Health Trust
2. Paternalism In Medicine featuring Amar Jesani, Founder of Anusandhan Trust and Editor of the Indian Journal Of Medical Ethics

Map Of Endorsements For The International Campaign For Women's Rights To Safe Abortion:
<https://campaignendorsements.crowdmap.com/>



Contribution To September 28

The Global Day Of Action For Access To Safe And Legal Abortion

The Global Tweetathon



Events Across Asia



ASAP along with our regional partner **WGNRR**, local partners, independent activists from Asia and Youth Champions hosted a Tweetathon On Sept. 28

The hashtags were **#Sept28** and **#Safeabortion**.

Tweeters stressed on the to make abortion accessible for all women including those in marginal groups.

Tweeters from Australia, New Zealand, The Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Iran, Lebanon and Cyprus, and Mongolia joined us!

Nepal:

Youth Champions Shreejana Bajracharya, Prabina Sujaku, Smriti Thapa, Shila Sharma and Luxmi Shresta conducted an Advocacy program for providers and a Radio Programme. They also organized two flashmobs one in Bhakthapur and one in Kathmandu.

India:

Youth Champion Shruti Mukerjee and TARSHI produced infographics on Safe Abortion. The entire set is on TARSHI's Facebook Page.

Indonesia:

Local partner **Samsara** joined the Tweetathon, conducted a successful Flashmob in Jogjakarta and showcased art related to abortion and women's rights.

Sri Lanka:

Youth Champions **Sarah Soysa** and **Dakshitha Wickremaratne** launched a photo campaign for safe abortion rights called It's Her Right.

You can find it on ASAP's page.

Iran:

Youth Champion Nikzad organized lectures on abortion in Iran and a movie screening.

Pakistan:

Our partners **Peace Foundation** conducted an awareness campaign while **Shirkat Gah** conducted a Panel on reducing the number of unsafe abortions in Pakistan.

Small Grants

ASAP provided small grants to the Youth Champions of 2012. Their projects carried out in 2012 and 2013 helped promote safe abortion in four countries across Asia.

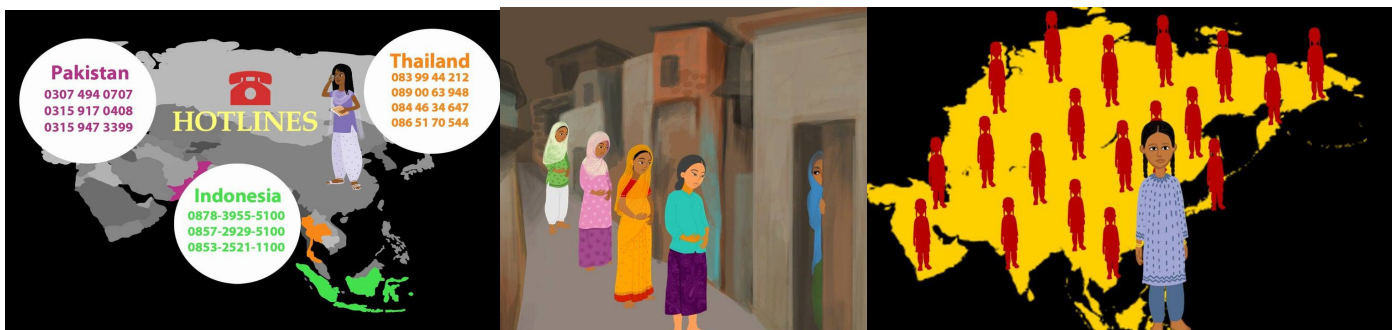
China: The Youth Champion conducted **three capacity building workshops** for peer educators in collaboration with the China Youth Network. Each workshop had about 25 attendees from various provinces around China. A **survey** was conducted among the participants to assess their understanding of safe abortion, as well as their understanding of the need for safe abortion. The findings of this survey will be used to make recommendations for changes in the current peer education manual. This manual is distributed among 2500 to 3000 peer educators in China.

India: The youth champion from India conducted a rapid quantitative study among 20 medical practitioners in the Indian State of Maharashtra in order to understand how the issue of sex-separation affects access to safe abortion and to separate sex-selection from safe abortion.

Lebanon: The youth champion from Lebanon plans to run a sexuality and reproductive health hotline that will provide accurate information on medical abortion to women who may need these services. As part of her project, she has designed a website with comprehensive information about gender, sexuality and reproductive health for women. This website will be available in English and in Arabic with additional material in the language of immigrant migrant workers in Lebanon.

Sri Lanka: The youth champion from Sri Lanka conducted a study among 1000 undergraduate student across 20 Sri Lankan universities to assess the knowledge and attitude of young men and women to safe abortion, and to the inclusion of a liberal policy on safe abortion in the upcoming Youth Policy Review in Sri Lanka.

Media Grant: ASAP made an animated short film “From Unwanted Pregnancy To Safe Abortion” through the small grant and released it on May 28, 2012 to celebrate the first anniversary of the International Campaign. Artist and illustrator Shachi Kale worked on the graphics and the film was written and edited by Shweta Krishnan, ASAP ‘s Communication Officer. Watch the Film here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mwv81v96ick>



Capacity Building:

Understanding The Updated WHO Safe Abortion Technical and Policy Guidance for Health Systems: Kuala Lumpur June 2013 and Ho Chi Minh City Dec 2013



In 2012, the WHO updated its technical and policy guidance for health systems, including its guidance on safe abortion.

ASAP organized a cascade training for the South East Asian region and the Middle East on June 1st and 2nd at **Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia** for medical doctors, women's rights activists, development workers, academics and trainers from Indonesia, Japan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.



ASAP's Steering Committee and staff conducted the sessions with the support of the WHO Medical Officer for the South East Asian Region, Dr. Arvind Mathur. Mark Molina, Senior Programme Officer for the IPPF – ESEAOR also participated in the workshop and shared valuable insights from his experience in advocacy with the Member Associations.



ASAP conducted a second workshop for midlevel providers between Tuesday 3rd – Thursday 5th December, 2013 at the Bong Sen Hotel, **Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam**.

The workshop also included a visit to the Tu Du Hospital with Dr. Tuyet, who is Vice Director of the Hospital, and Dr. Yen who is Head of the Family Planning Department.

Objectives:

It was expected that at the end of the cascade workshop, participants should be able to

1. Use the WHO Safe Abortion: Technical and Policy guidance for health systems as an advocacy tool
2. Build ASAP country focal teams
3. Create action plans for further dissemination and implementation of the guidance.



Youth Advocacy Institute - Refresher

A Follow-Up Training To the 2012 Youth Advocacy Institute



In November 2012, ASAP conducted its first Youth Advocacy Institute for Safe Abortion Rights for 13 young SRHR advocates from the countries of **China, Cyprus, India, Indonesia, Iran, Lebanon, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.**

6 candidates showed remarkable progress and were invited to participate in a Refresher Institute for Safe Abortion Rights on 2nd and 3rd Sept in Mumbai.

- Four of them were recipients of the ASAP small grant project to implement short-term projects in their own countries.
- Four of them were also selected to attend the UNESCAP Asia-Pacific Population Conference.
- All six were provided social media mentoring during the course of the year.



These participants were from the countries of **China, India, Iran, Lebanon, Nepal and Sri Lanka.**

Objectives of the Refresher Institute:

- To strengthen their capacity to be peer trainers in understanding access to safe abortion as a gender, sexual and reproductive rights, as well as human rights issue
- To consolidate the mentoring for utilization of social media for online thought leadership and advocacy.



Along with technical updates, the sessions ensured a deeper engagement with issues such as ethics, building social movements, impact of global economic policies on women's reproductive rights as well as a basic introduction to research methodologies. They also were able to advance and build upon their social media skills. Resource persons included Amar Jesani, Sana Contractor, Manisha Gupte and the ASAP Staff.

Youth Advocacy Institute - II

15 Youth Champions from Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam were trained!

With funding support from International Women's Health Coalition, ASAP conducted its second youth advocacy institute (YAI 2) between 4th and 7th Sept 2013 in Mumbai.



Objectives:

- To create a community of trained and sensitized **youth champions** who have an understanding of access to safe abortion as a gender and sexual and reproductive rights, as well as human rights issue.
- To facilitate the utilization of **social media** and other community level networking and communication by the youth champions through capacity building and ongoing mentoring.
- To support the **ongoing engagement** of the youth champions, within and outside their community to ensure implementation of the above strategies in order to advocate effectively for improved access to safe abortion services, including medical abortion.

Sessions introduced the participants to concepts on gender, patriarchy and rights, to technical updates on contraception and safe abortion, to prochoice ideologies and the use of effective communication.

Resource persons included Manisha Gupte, Uma Pocha, King Jelinska and the ASAP Staff. The institute was covered on ASAP's [Facebook Page](#), [Twitter page](#) and [blog](#).



ASAP Social Media Mentoring For Youth Champions:

45% of the world's Internet users live in Asia, and many of them are young people. Social media has become an important means to reach out to these young people.

ASAP has provided one on one mentoring for its Youth Champions from the institutes held in 2012 and 2013, allowing them to develop their social media skills and share accurate and important abortion-related information with their youth networks and with young people across their countries.



Youth Champion Shreejana Bajracharya started a blog on the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of young people in Nepal.

Read *Kumari: a Feminist* here:
<http://ceezana10.wordpress.com/>

Understanding Sex-Workers' Rights To Safe Abortion:

ASAP supported its local partner Karnataka Health Promotion Trust, with technical support for a two-day workshop for improving their interventions with sex workers through a better understanding of safe abortion, especially medical abortion.

The key participants of the workshop were Senior KHPT staff and field staff from four Districts – SBSS, Bellary, VMS Bangalore, CMS, Bagalkot and Tumkur.



Misoprostol Hotlines

Hotline numbers in Pakistan

0307-4940707 (Urdu, Punjabi)

0315-9473399 (Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi)

0315-9473399 (Urdu, Sindhi)

Hotline numbers in Thailand

083 - 9944212 Daily 8 -10 a.m. (Thai)

089 - 0063948 Daily 1- 4.30 p.m. (Thai)

084 - 4634647 Mon-Tues 9 - 10 p.m. (Thai)

083 - 9944212 Wed -Sun 6 - 9 p.m. (Thai)

Hotline numbers in Indonesia

062-274-6686120 (Bahasa)

021 - 96702013 (Bahasa)

Hotline numbers in Bangladesh

880 - 1853892424 (Bangla)

As part of the advocacy for ensuring wider and easier access for women seeking safe abortion services, ASAP has worked in collaboration with Women on Web to provide technical support to partners in Pakistan and Indonesia and recently in Bangladesh.

These hotlines receive about 60- 70 call /month for seeking information for Safe medical abortion.

ASAP also uses its social media and network to promote the hotline numbers launched by Women on Web in Thailand.



Financial Report:

ASAP has implemented its work on a series of projects/ activities through various donors and collaborations in the Year 2013. These activities were funded by the Packard Foundation, Mama Cash, PMDUP DFID Project, International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC) and SAAF.

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