

QUARTERLY REPORT

APRIL – JUNE 2019



Greetings from the Asia Safe Abortion Partnership!

The past 3 months have been quite eventful and full of solidarity. As always in this challenging work, there were some steps forward and some most decidedly backward. Here is a quick round up of what ASAP and our members and partners have been working on in the last quarter.

Inroads Gathering | 8th – 9th April, 2019 | Kathmandu, Nepal

Organized by Inroads

ASAP was represented at the Asia Regional Gathering of Inroads held at Kathmandu. Dr Suchitra Dalvie was present as were many of our Youth Champions. While Shreejana from Nepal talked about the importance of contraception along with always recognizing the need that women still need to have access to safe abortion, Priskila from Sri Lanka shared about the legal and advocacy situation in the country and the work being done by our country advocacy network YANSL. Dr Dalvie spoke about the politics of self-managed abortions.





CREA Reconference | 10th- 12th April | Kathmandu, Nepal

Organized by Crea

ASAP was represented at the CREA Recon by the Coordinator Dr Suchitra Dalvie and Assistant Coordinator Garima Shrivastava.



Among the many topics at the conference to reimagine, rethink and reboot, there were also critical and often controversial discussions around issues like prenatal testing, disability and abortion. Dr Suchitra Dalvie moderated and spoke on a panel discussion- Abortion in Asia: Selection, Termination and Determination. Youth Champion Durga Sapkota from Nepal was also a part of the panel.

Dr. Dalvie also spoke at a panel on cross movement solidarity and alliance building between disability rights and safe abortion. She highlighted how sex ratio and conversations around numbers is not useful if you don't talk about the politics around it. We need to recognise the systems of discrimination promoted and sustained by the patriarchy.



Sexual and Reproductive Rights in India: Social movements and legal battle | 14th – 15th April | Bangalore, India

Organized by Centre for Law and Policy Research

Dr Suchitra Dalvie spoke on 'Are we ready for Women's Right to Safe Abortion?' Her presentation covered issues around the Indian Penal Code Sections 312- 316, the MTP Act and its limitations and the increase in mis-information and stigma caused by the implementation of the PCPNDT Act.



Youth Advocacy Institute with MSAI | 1st- 2nd May, 2019 | Mumbai, India

Organized by ASAP

ASAP and our country advocacy network from India, ISAY conducted a YAI with students from Medical Students Association of India in Mumbai. This was facilitated by Coordinator Dr Suchitra Dalvie. Topics like intersectionalities and how they affect our decision making skills, mass media stereotyping and objectifying women and internet security were taken up by our experienced Youth Champions from Mumbai.



7th Youth Advocacy Refresher Institute | 10th – 12th May, 2019 | Mumbai, India

Organized by ASAP

We conducted our 7th Youth Advocacy Refresher (YAR) with 25 Youth Champions from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. It brought together Youth Champions from the Regional Youth Advocacy Institute (YAI) conducted in Colombo in December 2018 and several other YAI's conducted at the local level in these countries. We had also invited representatives of organizations working in sexual and reproductive rights, mainly on digital platforms, like [Agents of Ishq](#), [Point of View](#) and [Feminism in India](#). Asmita from FII also talked about their campaign #AbortionMeraHaq in collaboration with ASAP.



Dr Amar Jesani , founder of the [Indian Journal of Medical Ethics](#) talked about what conscientious objection means for doctors, while Nidhi Goyal shared her experience on disability rights and reproductive rights coming together and the things that need to be kept in mind, while dealing with the issue.

Also check out our [YAR report](#).



7th Annual SARJAI Convening | 16TH – 18th May, 2019 | Kathmandu, Nepal

Organized by South Asia Reproductive Justice and Accountability Initiative (SARJAI)



ASAP Assistant Coordinator Garima Shrivastava attended the 7th Annual SARJAI Convening held in Kathmandu, Nepal, MAY 16-18, 2019. She was part of the panel on conceptualizing a SARJAI Working Group on Abortion Legal Advocacy and spoke about Criminalization of abortion in South Asia and its impact.

Her presentation highlighted how criminal laws on abortion throughout South Asia shape knowledge, perception, and attitudes concerning abortion and how have these had different impacts on women's and girls' access to safe abortion services. She also spoke about the need for building cross movements solidarity and alliance building advocating for decriminalisation of abortion and creating more enabling legal environments for women to truly control their reproductive freedom.



YANP- Youth Advocacy Network Pakistan, Community Theatre Performance | 27th May | Pakistan



Our country Advocacy Network Youth Advocacy Network Pakistan organized a theatre performance for young girls in a school in collaboration with Institute for Social and Young Development on breaking stereotypes and advocating the need for enforcement of SRHR in the country



YoShan- Youth Led SRHR Advocacy Network, Menstrual Hygiene Day | 28th May | Nepal

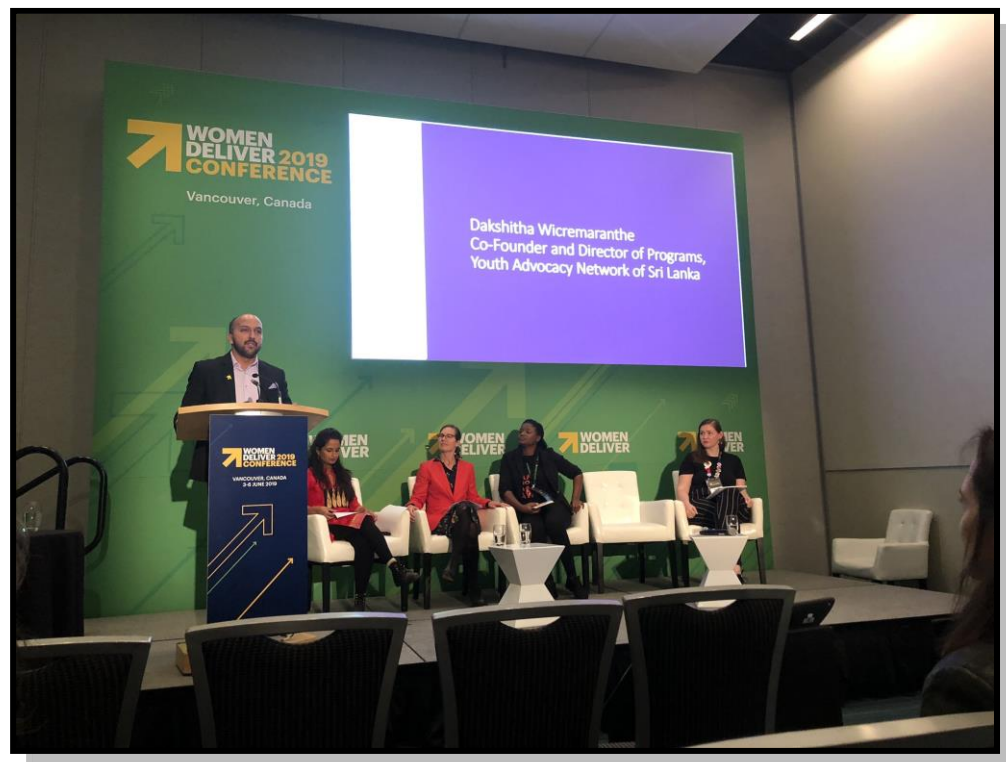
On Menstrual Hygiene Day 2019 and International Day of Action for Women Health our country advocacy network- Yo SHAN organized a discussion on safe motherhood and Reproductive Health Act with Maharajgunj Nursing Campus (Advance Nursing Group).



Women Deliver | 3rd June - 6th June | Vancouver, Canada

ASAP was heavily represented by our Youth Champions at the Women Deliver conference, held in Canada. Apart from sharing their individual experiences, many of them also highlighted the work of their respective country advocacy networks. Attached below are some of the topics they spoke on





Online Campaigns

#AbortionMeraHaq | 1st May – 28th May | Online

ASAP and Feminism in India ran an online campaign called #AbortionMeraHaq which translates to 'abortion is my right'. The campaign demanded safe, legal and affordable abortions for all who require an abortion.

Throughout the month we released posters, infographics, videos and articles talking about the different aspects of abortion rights in India – legal, medical and societal. We also hosted Twitter and Instagram chats with Dr Suchitra Dalvie to discuss abortion and clear up all misconceptions and myths. Some infographics are shared below.



13

people **die from unsafe abortions every day** in India.

Unsafe abortion is the **third** leading cause of maternal mortality in India.

Two-thirds of all abortions in India's 9 biggest states are unsafe.

Abortion stigma kills.

Making abortion safe, legal & accessible saves lives.

MYTH

Free availability of abortions lead to **sex selection** and **declining sex ratios** in the country.

Estimates indicate that **two to four per cent of all abortions in the country are son selective abortions**. In India, 80-90 per cent of reported abortions take place in the first trimester, while the sex selection is largely an issue in the second trimester.

FACT

INDIA'S ABORTION LAW NEEDS REFORM. WHY?

20 WEEKS IS NOT ENOUGH.

Many may not realise they are pregnant at 20 weeks – due to rape, low awareness of sexual and reproductive health, etc.



Doctors may deny treatment, and judicial recourse is slow.

Technological advancements allow for foetal anomalies to be discovered beyond 20 week mark.

No legal barrier, no religious barrier, no administrative barrier and no political barrier can stop a woman from getting an abortion, if she decides not to continue [her pregnancy]. By refusing her, you are pushing her towards unsafe abortions.

DR. SUNEETA MITTAL

Former HOD of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at AIIMS. Current Director at Fortis Medical Research Institute Gurgaon



THESE WOMEN WERE DENIED ABORTIONS BY THEIR DOCTORS

“

The doctor said that he needed my husband's signature on the abortion form. He called my husband and started asking him questions about me – my husband disconnected the call. After that, the doctor refused to perform my abortion, saying that, "I think your husband is not ready for your abortion. If I do it, I might face problems from your husband."

Quotes sourced from an unpublished article based on a study conducted by ASAP and a local partner as a follow up to a previous study published in the journal 'Reproductive Health Matters'.

The MTP Act specifies that women don't need consent from their parents or spouse to obtain an abortion. Informing them can put the pregnant woman at risk of violence.



My name is Sohrab and I am a 29 year old trans man. I need an abortion because my contraception failed. My pregnancy was unintended and adds to my gender dysphoria.

**Everyone deserves access to safe abortion.
Abortion is a human right.**

Some of our blogs were also republished

- [Why we need to get rid of abortion stigma](#)
- [We need to stop restricting abortion access in the name of women's rights](#)
- [What stops women from accessing safe abortion](#)

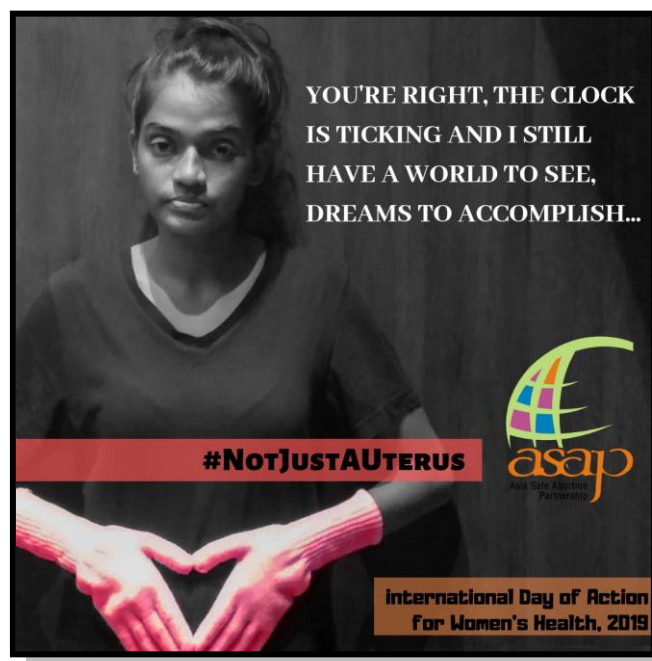
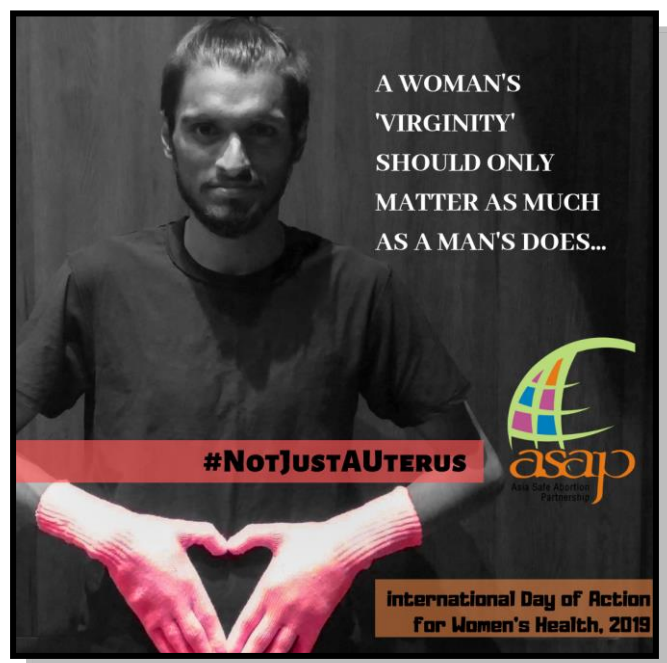
To know more about the campaign, please visit [#AbortionMeraHag](#)

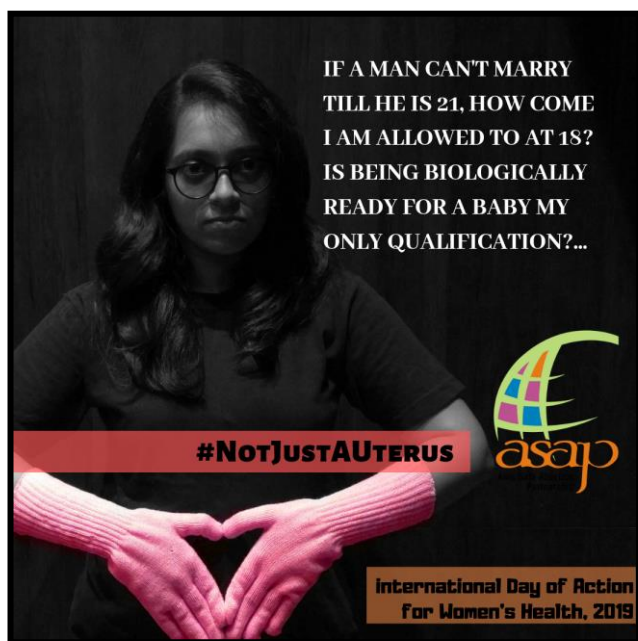
#NotJustAUterus | 28th May, 2019 | Online

May 28 is the International Day of Action for Women's Health, which has been commemorated worldwide for over 30 years by women's rights advocates and allies in the sexual and reproductive health and rights movement.

Like every year, this year also we led an online campaign. The theme for the partnership's campaign this year was #NotJustAUterus where we wanted to highlight the roles women can and do play beyond that of their reproductive abilities. This year we also wanted to challenge some of the many common stereotypes ascribed to women.


With this campaign our aim was to emphasize that women can be so much more than just mothers or wives or a medium to ensure continuity of her husband's lineage. Therefore each picture challenges one such norm in our society that reduces her value to her gender or her uterus with complete disregard for her choices. Shared below are some of our most popular posts





IF A MAN CAN'T MARRY
TILL HE IS 21, HOW COME
I AM ALLOWED TO AT 18?
IS BEING BIOLOGICALLY
READY FOR A BABY MY
ONLY QUALIFICATION?...

#NotJustAUterus

 asap
Asia Safe Abortion
Partnership

International Day of Action
for Women's Health, 2019

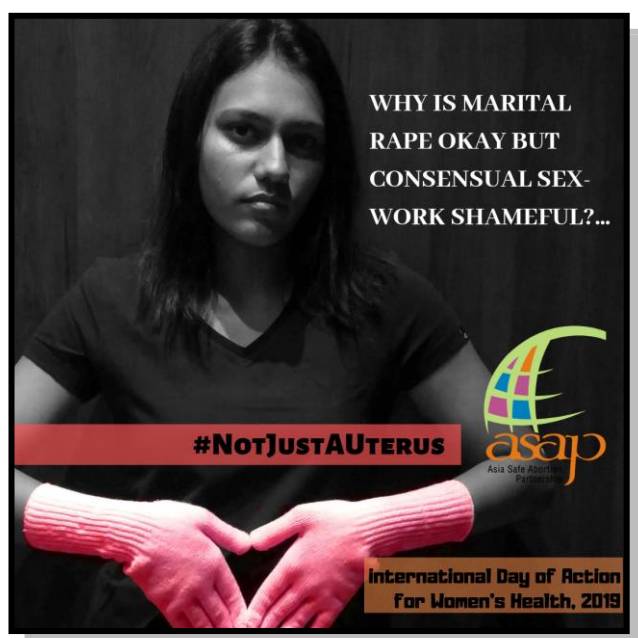


JUST BECAUSE I'M A
WOMAN DOESN'T MEAN I
HAVE TO WANT TO BE A
MOTHER...

#NotJustAUterus


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Women's Health, 2019

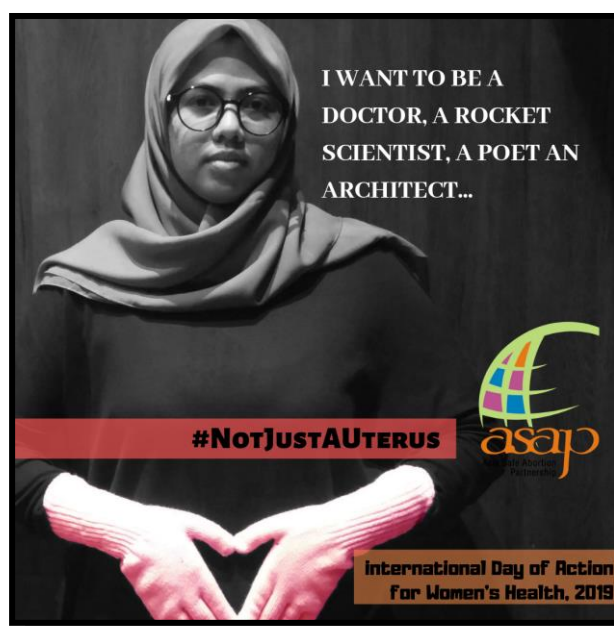


WHY IS MARITAL
RAPE OKAY BUT
CONSENSUAL SEX-
WORK SHAMEFUL?...

#NotJustAUterus


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International Day of Action
for Women's Health, 2019



I WANT TO BE A
DOCTOR, A ROCKET
SCIENTIST, A POET AN
ARCHITECT...

#NotJustAUterus

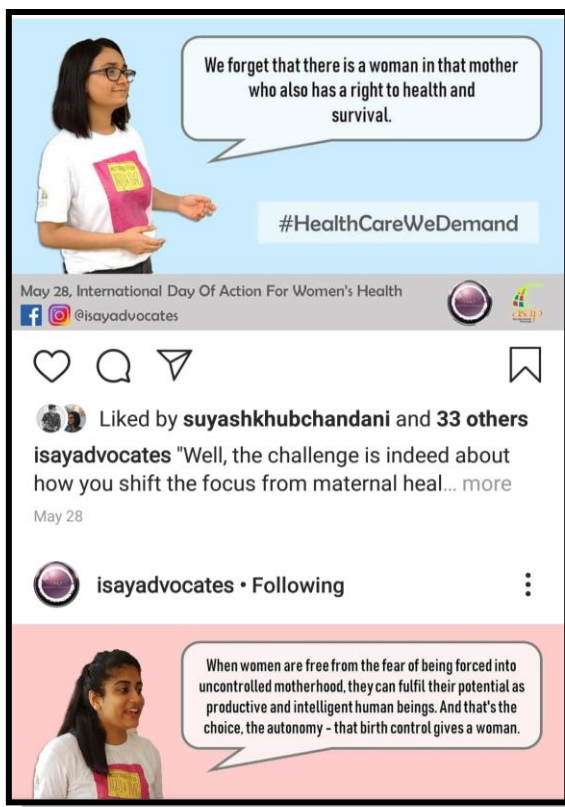
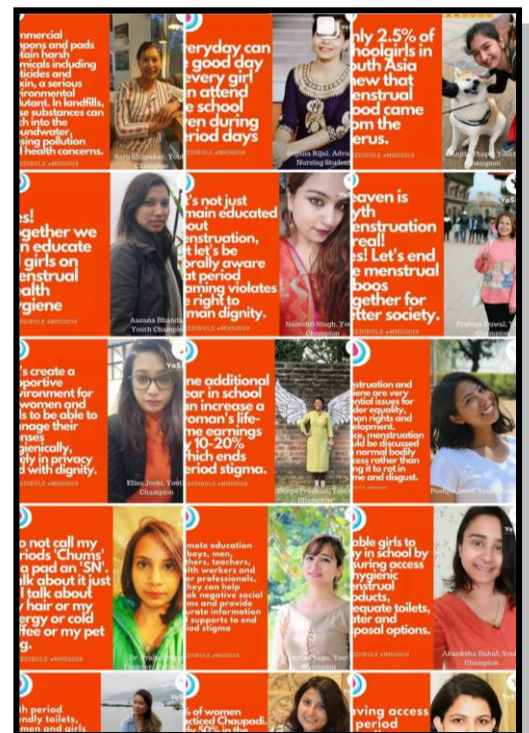
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#IBleedIRule – YoSHAN | 28th May | Online

Country advocacy network YoShan held a week long campaign for the menstrual hygiene day on 28th May, where they shared quotes from youth champions challenging and doing away with the stigma and shame associated with menstruation and bleeding.



#HealthCareWeDemand – ISAY | 28th May | Online

Country advocacy network from India- India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates, ran a month long campaign to de-stigmatize the issue of abortion while also highlighting the role health care professionals can play in making women more comfortable and how they can help them in realizing this right.