

Asia Safe Abortion Partnership Quarterly Report

April to June 2018



Greetings from the Asia Safe Abortion Partnership!

It's been another whirlwind few months here at the Asia Safe Abortion Partnership. As ever, we've been working on a range of exciting things and we're pleased to be able to share the highlights with you.

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Importance of Integrating an Understanding of Gender and Rights within Medical College Teaching for Providing Respectful Maternity Care 12th April, 2018 | Guwahati, India

Organised by the Directorate of Medical Education, Government of Assam and the UNICEF, Assam, the meeting was convened to explore the importance of integrating a comprehensive understanding of gender and rights within medical college teaching.

The key presentations of the meeting examined the links between gender and health systems and the morality of healthcare provision. The meeting discussed the role of healthcare providers and institutions, and mapped pathways for future actions.

Dr. Suchitra Dalvie, Coordinator, and Dr Amar Jesani represented the Asia Safe Abortion Partnership at the meeting.



'Hum Gunahgaar Aurtein (We Sinful Women)' Celebrating Women's Voices 24th April, 2018 | New Delhi, India



Amnesty International India has launched a campaign to call attention to how online spaces are quickly becoming hostile environments for women to work in, and hosted a panel discussion on the issue. Panellists Rana Ayyub, Award-winning author and journalist; Neha Dixit, Award-winning Independent Journalist; Kiruba Munusamy, Advocate, Supreme Court of India and Dalit rights activist; and Kavita Krishnan, a feminist activist, member of the Politburo, CPI (ML) and Secretary of the AIPWA discussed dealing with online harassment and the how various redressal systems responded to their complaints. The event was attended by Swetha Sridhar, Communications and Networking Officer, on behalf of the Asia Safe Abortion Partnership.

Building Robust SRHR Policy A Multi-stakeholder Meeting 28th May, 2018 | New Delhi, India

The Asia Safe Abortion Partnership in collaboration with Haiyya, organised a multi-stakeholder meeting on the 28th of May, which was designed as a forum to bring together different players in the SRHR sector to enable dialogue across stakeholder groups. The meeting was convened with the objective of identifying action gaps between available services and accessible healthcare services, and the goals for the meeting were:

- ❖ To map health systems and service providers, with a view to identifying key issues and gaps in current sectoral work,
- ❖ To identify actions to improve access to healthcare services for women.



Ensuring reproductive justice in India

How do we make Safe Abortions more Accessible?

7th June, 2018 | Mumbai, India

GHS in partnership with the Asia Safe Abortion Partnership (ASAP) organised a media roundtable targeted at media professionals in order to raise the discourse on abortion, and highlight abortion as a critical SRH issue in India.



The objectives of the meeting were:

- ❖ To engage journalists in Maharashtra on the need to highlight and raise awareness on key SRH and abortion issues
- ❖ To encourage a culture where key media outlets and editors are open to covering abortion and SRH-related issues
- ❖ To help familiarise journalists to the nuances of abortion reporting
- ❖ To facilitate the inclusion of the voices of technical experts, civil society as well as human-interest stories from the grassroots, in abortion-related media coverage

Dr. Suchitra Dalvie, Coordinator, represented the Asia Safe Abortion Partnership at the meeting.

Leading Indian national and regional dailies covered the event such as the [Hindustan Times](#), [The Hindu](#) and [Mumbai Live](#).



Roundtable on Prenatal Testing, Disability and Abortion 14th June | New Delhi, India



The meeting sought to bring together people working across diverse areas of reproductive rights, disability rights, bioethics and reproductive technologies, to create a space where activists representing different political positions could have a conversation. The meeting was convened against the backdrop of the rapid proliferation of genetic testing technology, absence of regulation in its use and the amorphous nature of counselling, which necessitates revisiting the pragmatic choices by women's rights groups and others campaigning to address sex selection two and half decades ago.

Dr. Suchitra Dalvie, Coordinator, ASAP attended the meeting as the representative of the Partnership.

CAN ACTIVITIES

Building Strong Movements 15th April, 2018 | Timphu, Bhutan

The Druk-Youth Initiative of Sexual Advocacy (D-YISA), our Country Advocacy Network in Bhutan, conducted a workshop on how to strengthen networks amongst youth, build and effectively use strong teams, and channel that for SRHR advocacy. The workshop addressed conceptual issues of feminism, medical patriarchy, and social stigma, and organizational tactics such as building an effective theory of change and so forth. The group of participants consisted predominantly of medical students from the Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences (KGUMS).

Youth Advocacy Institute 10th – 12th May, 2018 | Mumbai India

Our Youth Champions from India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates conducted a 3 day workshop aimed at discussing the roots of patriarchy and how it affects access to safe abortion.

The workshop was attended by 13 participants who despite varying backgrounds such as medicine, mass media, law, and commerce share an interest in talking about gender and patriarchy and advocating a pro-choice stance.





At the workshop we were told that boys aren't encouraged to cut cakes as a way of celebrating their birthdays, so we simply had to order and cut a few cakes to smash the patriarchy. Talk about having our cake and eating it too!

Youth Advocacy Institute 17th -19th June, 2018 | Timphu, Bhutan

The first Youth Advocacy Institute in Bhutan, the workshop was convened with the intention of laying the foundation for a community of trained and sensitized Youth Champions, and inculcating an understanding of access to safe abortion as sexual and reproductive rights, as well as human rights issue. The workshop discussed patriarchy in healthcare, gender norms in everyday life, the role of feminism in contemporary society, and much more!



PUBLICATIONS



In The Name of the Mother Dr. Suchitra Dalvie | In Plainspeak

In this article, Dr. Dalvie explores why people swear, but more crucially, why the vast majority of all swear words are somehow related to sex (as in the act), or sexuality.

he writes “swear words that are considered to be really offensive are somehow directed at shaming women and, by association, their sexuality and even their bodily functions and body parts”

<http://www.tarshi.net/inplainspeak/in-the-name-of-the-mother/>

Power of Partnerships: Conference Report

We’ve distilled the best of content from our 10th Anniversary Conference – ‘The Power of Partnerships: Celebrating 10 years of movement building for Safe Abortion Advocacy’ – into a report.

You can access our report [here](#).

CAMPAIGNS

International Day of Action for Women’s Health Campaign 28th May, 2018

As we do every year, the Asia Safe Abortion Partnership marked International Day of Action for Women’s Health 2018. The theme for the Partnership’s campaign this year was #ThatsWhatSheSaid, a play on the commonly used colloquial joke phrase.

The phrase ‘That’s What She Said’ is often used as a punch line to jokes as a way of making the preceding statement sexual innuendo. The format of the joke sees women as devoid of having any sexual agency and a subject-body. Through our campaign, we reclaimed the phrase, #ThatsWhatSheSaid, to center women in the demand for their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Our campaign tied into the global theme that sought to highlight the imperative to create safe spaces for women to talk about their health needs without stigma and judgement. We went a step further to argue that these safe spaces are useful only if they mainstream women’s voices in the demand for comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Our campaign this year was conceptualized and developed by our cohort of Youth Champions at the [India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates \(I-SAY\)](#).

"Women's sexual health is not up for *grabs*."



That's what she said!

May 28, International Day Of Action For Women's Health

f ISAY- India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates

International Day of Action For Women's Health

DON'T POKE YOUR PENIS PRIVILEGE INTO MY VAGINA



THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID!

Asia Safe Abortion Partnership

"I'm going to scream about women's health until my voice becomes hoarse enough to be mistaken for a man's so that people actually start to listen to me."



That's what she said!

May 28, International Day Of Action For Women's Health

f ISAY- India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates

"Going to the gynaecologist isn't limited to just being pregnant."



That's what she said!

May 28, International Day Of Action For Women's Health

f ISAY- India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates

International Day of Action For Women's Health

MAN-MADE LAWS DO NOT FIT INTO MY UTERUS



THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID!

Asia Safe Abortion Partnership

"Demanding better health care for women is NOT an ovary action."



That's what she said!

May 28, International Day Of Action For Women's Health

f ISAY- India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates

"Sexual and reproductive health is not a privilege, but a right."



That's what she said!

May 28, International Day Of Action For Women's Health

f ISAY- India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates

"Nudity does not mean consent."



That's what she said!

May 28, International Day Of Action For Women's Health

f ISAY- India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates

"Fighting oppression is my obsession."



That's what she said!

May 28, International Day Of Action For Women's Health

f ISAY- India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates

"A woman will be free the day she has control over her own body."



That's what she said!

May 28, International Day Of Action For Women's Health

f ISAY- India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates

"We demand: Accessibility, Availability and Affordability of health care for women."



That's what she said!

May 28, International Day Of Action For Women's Health

f ISAY- India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates

"Don't put your morality in my sexuality."



That's what she said!

May 28, International Day Of Action For Women's Health

f ISAY- India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates

She Decides, IWHC and some of the Country Networks and members collaborated to disseminate the message widely.