

# 7<sup>th</sup> Regional Youth Advocacy

## Institute: Workshop Report

Colombo, Sri Lanka

11<sup>th</sup>- 14<sup>th</sup> December 2018



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# Introduction

The 7<sup>th</sup> Regional Youth Advocacy Institute was organized for 4 days at the Mirage Hotel in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2018.

This YAI saw participants from across 10 countries – Bangladesh, Pakistan, Iran, Vietnam, Malaysia, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Philippines and India, working along the spectrum of sexual and reproductive health and rights in their respective regions. It was an interesting experience for all the participants to get first hand exposure of various gendered inequalities and stands on abortion rights from countries beyond their own, which helped them to draw parallels but also to understand the regional limitations that exist.

## DAY 1, MONDAY 11<sup>TH</sup>

We started the first day with setting norms and responsibilities, followed by a fun ice breaker which got the participants very well acquainted with each other along with setting the tone for a non-judgemental and free space for discussions.

This was followed by Dr Dalvie sharing in brief about the work of ASAP and what the upcoming 4 days held for all participants. She then introduced the team and co- facilitator for the day Dr Manisha Gupte, who is the founder of MASUM, an organization working for welfare of women in rural Maharashtra and has been a part of pioneering grassroots movements and in the reproductive and health sector along with being an important ally for the partnership.

### Session 1: Understanding Gender and Patriarchy and it's linkages with Safe Abortion issues



Dr Gupte started this session with talking about the social construct that dictates our behaviour and the binary roles we are forced to play since birth when you are immediately assigned as a male or female. She talked about what the word intersex means and how it doesn't just depend on the external genitalia but internal as well (ovaries, chromosomes etc). However it is an external imposition as well, through ascribing certain roles and responsibilities and anyone who doesn't fit in the margins of society is given labels that stigmatize them, which proves that biological differences may be quite small but the social differences are vast.

She explained this by giving examples of how a boy has to become the resource person outside the house while a girl has to play the assigned role of staying inside the house, or how boys are raised to be assertive and girls to be submissive and timid. All this is done to constantly reinforce gender as a social construct to make sure there is no shift in power and the status quo remains.

She then asked the participants to share how gender norms are enforced on an everyday basis in their countries and these were some of the responses

- Philippines - why study law when you will marry and change your name and be in another family
- Indonesia – when a girl gets pregnant in high school, she is expelled but the boyfriend gets to stay
- Vietnam – at a dinner party, men sit on a different and higher table while eating
- Pakistan – male nurse, cannot practice midwifery in his own country
- Malaysia – you need permission from your husband if you want to get a contraceptive device/tubectomy
- Sri Lanka – harassment on the bus, “if you go on the bus as a woman, you should be able to bear it

Dr Gupte then moved on to talk about the root cause of this socialization and also the biggest hurdle in letting people accept and enjoy their gender identity. This is the system of patriarchy.

She began by dissecting the word to its literal meaning which is:

Pater + Archy – rule of the father.

She explained how it isn't the rule a particular father, but the rule of all fathers – social fathers, political fathers, economic fathers – and how it is a structure.

Patriarchy works best through thought control. It is critical for them to control people using their gender roles and limiting their right to reproduce. This makes controlling the sexuality of women inevitable because it becomes very important for the man to be sure that a woman is definitely carrying his offspring. The best way to make sure of that is by ensuring that she never has sex with anyone else other than him, either before or during marriage (and even after for widows)



So how does he make sure of that? By controlling the women's mobility and decision making power and ensuring their financial dependence.

She gave examples of how women are unable to inherit property, never the decision maker and are always supposed to be submissive. This obviously seeps into ideological thinking creating a hegemonic acceptance of patriarchy, not only by men but also women themselves.

### **Gender Stereotyping in Mass Media**



After a short tea break from the previous session, participants gathered again to discuss how gender stereotyping takes place in mass media and this was facilitated by a member of Youth Advocacy and Network in Sri Lanka and a journalist : Aisha Nazim.

She shared a few clips of widely viewed ads or posters or even entire songs, that portray women as either mere objects of entertainment for the male or fixates the regressive roles that women are 'supposed' to play as per society. There was intense interaction amongst all present, as everyone shared examples from their country in terms of how very problematic gender stereotypes are reinforced through mass media or social media and how they are commonly accepted and easily find affirmation in the everyday life of people.

## Session 2: Human Rights, Sexual and Reproductive Rights

The YAI was being held right after the world was celebrating International Human Rights Day and so Dr Manisha discussed in- depth what Human Rights means and how relevant it is to look at it from different perspectives, especially for reproductive rights.

She stated that Human Rights should ideally mean rights that every human being is entitled to , but the difficulty lies in recognizing the humanity of all peoples. Rights have to be recognized by the state, but every human being has them intrinsically, even though formally it is just a twentieth century concept.

She broke down the attributes of Human rights as

- Universal – every single human being has them
- Intrinsic – does not need proof (nationality, morality etc)
- Inalienable – cannot be taken away
- Indivisible – cannot be granted 'in part'
- Inter-dependent – E.g- right to education vs right to women's mobility
- Non-hierarchical

She explained further how intersectionality exists in human rights as well and that strengthening of one right may lead to erosion for others.

By giving examples she explained that civil and political rights (right to freedom of speech, right to information etc) are often pitted against economic, social and cultural rights.



## Session 2: Humans Rights, Sexual And Reproductive Rights

Human rights are essential for all human beings to lead a life of dignity and fulfilment and hence they need to be incorporated into a legally binding agreement if they have to be protected, enforced or monitored. Violations should be addressed and remedies should be claimed through law and policy, however culture and traditions often curtail even the most intrinsic human rights where the biggest brunt is taken by the women and other minorities.

She then moved on to differentiate between needs based approach and the rights based approach to human rights by throwing in the following statement for discussion:

‘Fatima needs an abortion.’ Vs. ‘An abortion is Fatima’s right.’

Most participants agreed to the fact that needs and rights are interlinked and interdependent but we should always have a rights based approach as that ensures standardisation, justiciability, safety and redressal.

Dr Manisha then talked about reproductive rights and the basic recognition of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number and timing of their children and to have the necessary reproductive health information and means to do so. This also includes the right to make these decisions free of any discrimination or coercion.

We started by discussing the definition given by International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), held at Cairo in 1994, where for the first time it was recognized that the governments need to meet the fulfil the sexual and reproductive rights of individuals rather than just country demographic targets.

The shift from Reproductive Health to Reproductive Rights was recognized and broadened then at the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on women in Beijing where the inalienable right of women to exercise full autonomy over their body and sexuality and reproductive health was laid out.

Dr Gupte discussed how childbearing is a social and not a personal choice anymore, which has reduced the bodies of women to just being the pawn among the struggle between states, religions and the male heads of household in our society.

When talking about reproductive rights, she also covered the importance of sexual rights of an individual which are constructed through interaction between the individual and the social structures. Since it is still a taboo issue, sexual rights are often completely neglected or considered the last priority even across the liberal spectrum.

However at the 14<sup>th</sup> World Congress for Sexology in 1999, a declaration of sexual rights was put forward which included the following as basic sexual right of an individual

- The Right to Sexual Freedom
- The right to sexual autonomy
- The right to sexual privacy
- The right to sexual equity

- The right to sexual pleasure
- The right to emotional sexual expression
- The right to sexually associate freely
- The right to make free and responsible reproductive choices
- The right to sexual information based upon scientific inquiry
- The right to comprehensive sexuality education
- The right to sexual healthcare

### Session 3: Value Clarification and Case Studies Abortion issues



Participants reconvened after lunch to be a part of an interesting activity, facilitated by Dr Dalvie aimed at helping us understand how social values can impact our individual rights.

She started by talking about what it really means to have certain values and feel passionately about the perspective we believe in as opposed to someone else's values who might have a completely contradictory viewpoint as ours. She also talked about how our values play an important role in the decisions we make and are often assimilated in our everyday life and actions. She then asked the participants to take a stand on the statements read out by her as either in Agreement or in Disagreement.



Some statements used by her were

- Women who have HIV/AIDS should not have babies
- Choosing the sex of one's child is a reproductive right
- A woman should be able to have an abortion even if her husband wants her to continue the pregnancy

The response to this activity was very interesting and for some participants even a revelation to an extent, because up until now they had been looking at these issues from a limited lens and for them it was surprising how an answer to any of these questions can just not be in black or white.

For instance, it was easy for the participants for the 3<sup>rd</sup> statement to say that she should get an abortion, but when they took into account the economic and social condition of the woman, they realized that what may seem obvious to us as activists can be very distant from the harsh realities of survival.

Dr Dalvie concluded this thought provoking session by stating how as activist, we may not always the right or the exact answers to all problems that we come across, but the best weapon we do have is to have complete theoretical and statistical knowledge of the issue we're dealing with, because with half information we are not doing justice either to the cause or to the sections of society we claim to

#### Session 4: Power Walk and Intersectionalities

We ended the first day with a session facilitated by our very own Lakmini Prabani who is an active member of YANSL, which is working towards ensuring safe abortion services and reproductive rights of women living in Sri Lanka.



The Power Walk explored the concept of intersectionality by calling attention to the power dynamics of society through which marginalized people are left behind while the ones who are comparatively more privileged or powerful are able to move ahead. The activity required participants to first stand in a line, with a hidden identity that only they knew of and were then asked to move forward if, based on their identity they had the power and resources to acquire the knowledge or services that were called out by Lakmini. The activity was mainly about how restricted each participant felt, or assumed their inferior position as to being able to access services available to others.

As an interesting add on to the day Dr Manisha shared the concept of the Malthusian theory with the participants in order for us to realize how certain political and state driven agendas can in fact violate the reproductive rights of the individual as the state imposes and decides on the reproductive choices of individuals and couples.

She also touched upon the Pro-Natalist concept of population control which was developed in the West and was characterised by provision of services and incentives to couples to bear children and the Anti-natalist concept of population control, mainly adopted by countries like China where population is booming and the government restricts on how many children a couple can have.

She closed the day with food for thought for all participants regarding how we commonly assume that over population is the cause for lack of development in third world countries, where in fact the root cause is unequal distribution of wealth and the hoarding of the resources by a minority section of the society.

## DAY 2, TUESDAY, 12<sup>TH</sup>

We started the 2<sup>nd</sup> Day with a recap of the previous ones to understand the effectiveness of sessions and how far the participants have been able to relate with everything we discussed as of the first day. Some of the feedback received included

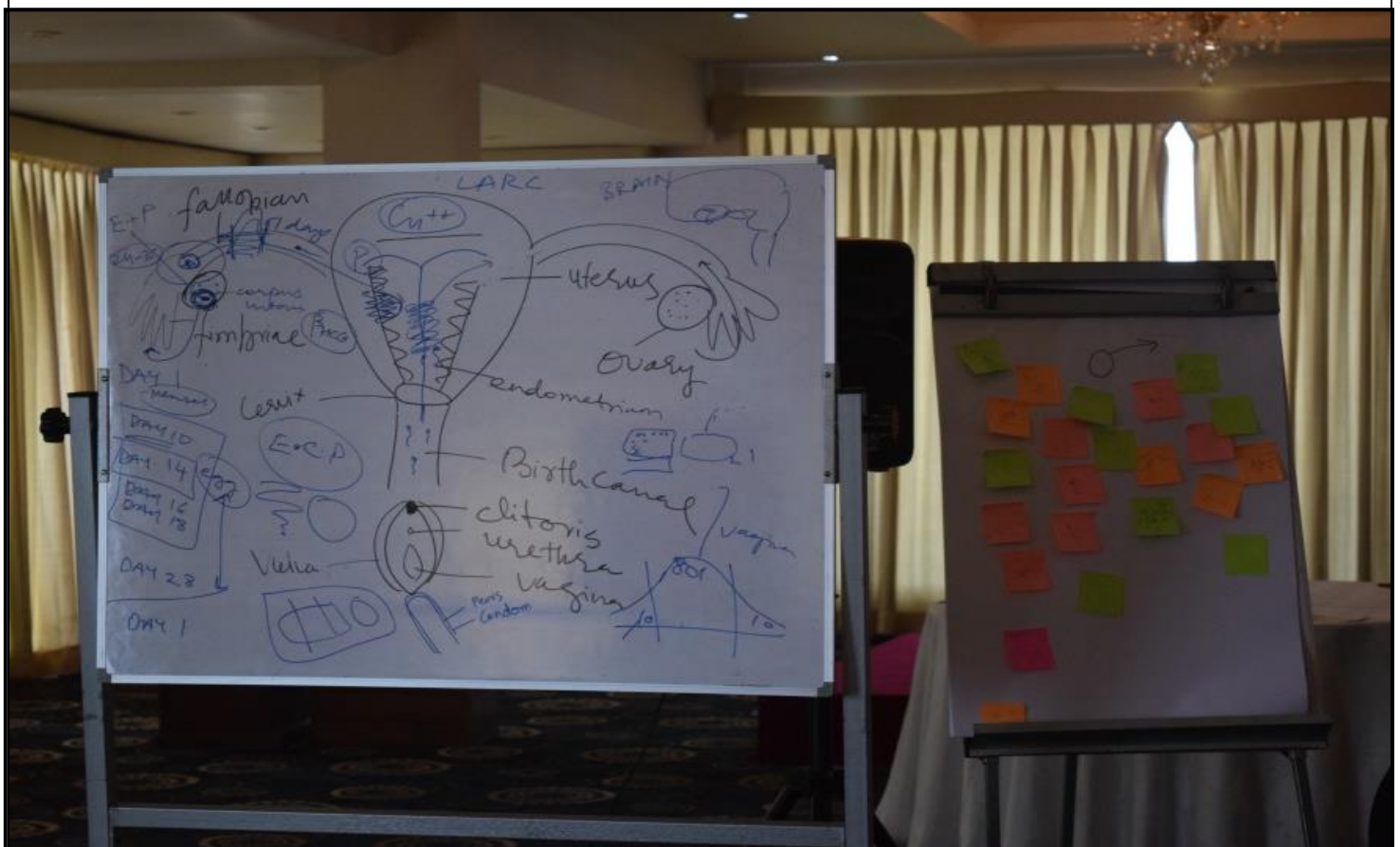
- Through the power walk a learned a lot about inequality and how one must always try to challenge their own situations to move forward
- It was good to learn about the Malthus theory and have a historical perspective regarding family planning
- We may be trying to spread awareness through mass media but they also perpetuate a lot of gender stereotypes
- Value clarification made me realize how important it is to question everything that seems 'normal' and to understand the perspective of your oppressor to find a solution

- It was a major refresher for me and to understand the importance of each word in the acronym we use called SRHR
- Sessions on patriarchy and gender built a neat narrative for us to understand public and private oppression while value clarification helped me reconsider my fixed opinions
- Need based and right based approach was very helpful, particularly with regards to a woman's right to abortion, especially in the context of my country
- This was my first training and it was very knowledgeable. I understood how contraception and family planning are not the only solution, but what we require is development for all
- Unpacked and unlearned many things just to learn more from a fresh perspective and to take all this back to my country

### Session 4: Updates on reproduction, contraception and safe abortion

We started the second day with participants asked to draw the female and male reproductive systems. After this Dr Dalvie explained in detail the working of the menstrual cycle, conception and contraception.

A lot of myths were busted in these session, especially with regards to the emergency contraceptive pill, where the myth about the dangers are often exaggerated to prevent it from being seen as an 'easy' option for women and girls.





We talked about some methods that are available to avoid pregnancy

- Abstinence- Avoid vaginal intercourse completely
- Contraception- Using the methods available like condoms, diaphragm, pills etc
- Abortion- terminating the pregnancy

Abstinence is obviously a tougher alternative for humans, because we are the only animals that have sex all year round, not just for procreation but for pleasure, so contraception and abortion are the two most commonly available practices for us.

We had an interactive discussion on the various methods of contraception and the way they work.

- Male and female condoms
- Intrauterine Contraceptive Devices
- Hormonal methods--Oral Contraceptive Pills, Implants, Injections
- Tubal Occlusion , Vasectomy
- Emergency Contraceptive Pill





The net part of the session focussed on safe abortion methods with a demo of the manual vacuum aspiration method.

We used a ripe papaya for this and the hands-on practise helped the participants realize that the process itself is nothing as scary or draconian and so many barriers make it impossible for women to access something so simple that can be life- saving.

After understanding how pregnancy occurs and the different forms of contraception that are available, along with the most easiest explanation of how abortion works we moved on to look at the different laws that exist across Asia when it comes to safe abortion services. This session was facilitated by Dr Shilpa Shroff and she began by asking the participants the abortion laws they are aware of. Some of the responses that were shared were

- Indonesia- Abortion can be performed up to 6 weeks for women who are raped or there is a threat to their mental health
- Pakistan- Abortion is legal up to 9 weeks, or in case of 'necessary treatment. To be decided on by the doctors.
- Sri Lanka- Abortion is highly restricted and only available to save the mother's life
- Nepal- Abortion laws are fairly liberal as a woman can ask for an abortion up to 12 weeks (14 weeks in case of rape) without even giving a reason to the provider.
- Bhutan- Abortion is only legal to save a woman's life as it is considered a sin in Bhutan to end a life.
- Vietnam- Abortion laws are favourable to women as it is allowed up to 22 weeks, however private service providers can only do so until 6 weeks. Sex selection is banned and stigma is still a big barrier towards safe abortion for women

## Session 5: Abortion Laws in Asia



Dr Shilpa then explained why it is important to keep this in mind and instead of saying that abortion is banned or illegal, we should say that abortion is restricted. It is completely banned in only a handful of countries. Additionally Canada is the only country that doesn't have a law on abortion and only requires the consent of woman. This may be good but may also backfire as the providers can deny abortion but even then they have to refer them to someplace else.

There are only 3 countries in this world where abortion is highly restricted and these are Malta, Philippines and Nicaragua.

## Session 6: What does it mean to be pro-choice?

After a short tea break all participants reassembled to really understand from Dr Dalvie, what it really means to be pro-choice. Like all or previous sessions we began by asking the participants to reflect on why are they actually here, to which a lot of them responded saying that they wanted to take back from the experiences of activists from other countries and because fundamentally we are all unsatisfied with how things are and want to be the real change makers.

Dr Dalvie continued on similar lines to talk in detail about how in majority of the countries women have not been able to fully explore their abortion rights especially in countries with highly restrictive laws. Even where it is talked about, it usually is taken in context of biomedical issue instead of its relevance in the social context. Even where countries have good laws, their implementation is the tricky area which pushes to more and more women depending on unsafe methods of getting an abortion.

Talking about what exactly pro- choice means because other socio-economic factors also have a role to play especially when we are living at a time when everything has a political/religious agenda involved. Dr Dalvie explained this with the help of the debate on sex selection.

In India, given the declining child sex ratio it was considered to be important to stop second trimester abortion in the belief that this would 'fix' the sex ratio.

But we then had a discussion on the root cause of this and why it was important to eliminate the preference for the male child rather than prevent women from being able to choose a safe abortion. Patriarchal socio –cultural practises result in a society where son preference is a norm whereas female child is considered a burden in a society.

Dr Dalvie then went on to explain that due to using phrases like 'sex selective abortion' the practice of abortion altogether has earned a bad name, while not even really solving the root problem for sex preference.

The idea of preferring a male child over female child is a larger structural problem and it needs to be solved in that manner, instead of putting the blame on one woman or one doctor for carrying out abortion.

In fact many programs and advertisements that encourage female childbirth themselves perpetrate patriarchy by putting out slogans like, 'If you kill all girls then who will marry your sons'.

Now this is problematic because you are still not addressing the mind set in which the existence of women is nothing more than as support system to their male counterparts. Since patriarchy is deeply rooted and a very systematic part of the social order, it needs to be tackled in more strategic manner and historical movements have shown worldwide that the best tool at hand for all any activist and change-maker is that of subversion.

Subversion is loosely defined as a tactic in which certain principles of a system are contradicted in an attempt to transform the established social order and structures of authority. As a change maker it is important to look into any issue in the following order if we are looking for a long term solution to the problem:

1. Identify the problem
2. Gather information
3. Make a decision
4. Plan
5. Take Action
6. Evaluate. Repeat

Most important aspect of subversion has to be the use of popular culture and turning it into something that benefits our cause and also mocks the status quo.

Dr Dalvie then shared examples of how certain popular princess stories of Disney which fixate gender stereotypes have been turned around by gender activists, following which one of the participants Asmita Ghosh from Feminism in India also shared with everybody a video she had created which was a spoof of a popular international song, with lyrics that challenged the institution of marriage in Indian Society. We then discussed the relevance of the #MeToo movement and how it was successful because of social media revolution and its impact on the current structure by famous personalities who had the legitimacy to pull something off so big and global.

After this discussion we moved on to reading a few articles from instances and stories across Asia that represented some of the most brutal manifestations of patriarchy in our society.

Some highlights from the most debated articles were the following

- Pakistan- We read the story about Qandeel Baloch who was murdered by her brother for openly talking about her sexuality and empowered women through her videos.
- Nazi Germany- The article spoke about how women were considered son bearing machines who would grow up to serve in the army. Quotes like, “The mission of a woman is to be beautiful and give birth”, were widely popular
- Pro-natalist Governments- We came across a lot of countries that controlled the sexualities and reproductive rights of the women by either motivating them towards or limiting the no of children they can have. Some of them were Russia, Japan, Singapore, Denmark, Korea and Romania

After taking a short tea break we all reassembled to watch, enjoy but also critically analyse the popular movie ‘Dirty Dancing’ and end the day on a lighter, yet thoughtful note.

### DAY 3, WEDNESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup>

As usual we started our 3<sup>rd</sup> day first with a recap of the previous one followed by a small discussion on the movie we saw.

Some of the feedback received was:

- Yesterday’s sessions made me think about the ethical dilemma of sex selection and safe abortion since we never talked about it like that in Philippines
- Reading articles from different countries made me realize how different but yet how similar the perpetuation of patriarchy is
- I changed my mind regarding sex selective abortion. In Vietnam the government really pushes it but now I wonder what is the real motive

When discussing the movie a lot of participants talked about part of illegal abortion in the movie and how it big of a taboo it was shown to be. We also talked about how the male lead felt sexually exploited in the movie, which isn’t very commonly heard or believed upon while also discussing the paternal character of the father who kept dismissing his wife and daughters, prioritising his own views and thought process.



## Session 7: Interpersonal Communication



The aim of this session was to mainly understand the communication loop and the importance of message and medium, body language and other non-verbal cues along with the importance of obtaining feedback.

So our 3<sup>rd</sup> day started with Dr Shilpa facilitating an interesting and famous game called 'chinese whispers' among the 25 students, where 2 different messages were circulate from both ends and travelled through each person and were shared loudly by the one who receives it last from both ends. Obviously both the messages were completely transformed into something that didn't even make sense.

Dr Shilpa then explained that this is also how communication with regards to safe abortion also works across the globe through different countries and laws and circumstances and is often subject to interpretation. Therefore it becomes important as activists if we want our message to be loud and clear and to reach to the maximum audience that we pay great attention to our messaging but also take into consideration the perspective of our target audience so that it is not twisted to end up becoming something else.



Following this we moved on to understand how mediums of communication work by participating in another activity where few selected people were asked to stand in a line and represent the cue cards given to them.

The cue cards were basically labelled as per how any email travels from one computer to another, so it started from 'First computer to 'Server' to 'Internet' up until the message is received in the 'Second Computer'. This activity explained how each message travels through various forms of surveillance by the authorities and government and therefore can be tricky in regions where safe abortion is highly restricted and someone who needs one tries to reach to a provider for the same. Dr Shilpa then explained the importance of different forms of communication that we have available and their relevance with context to each region/country.

## Session 8: Discussion on Intersectionalities- Disabilities, migrants and refugees.



After the important sessions of understanding the relevance of language and manner of communication when advocating for abortion rights we moved on to hearing experiences from the participants who represented some of the amazing work they had been doing in their respective countries despite their challenging political and social scenarios. Some highlights for us were

- We had a disability rights activist from Balochistan, Pakistan who shared how she along with her friends decided to do theatre and attract attention of people to the problem that women living with disabilities face in Pakistan, on the International Disability Day. Following its success they decided to make a documentary that depicted their every-day life amidst lack of enough accessible spaces. Not surprisingly the documentary was very well received and was even published by Dawn and BBC. She also talked about the larger stigma that women with disabilities have to face especially when it comes to reproductive rights. For instance a lot of families prefer to get hysterectomies done of women in order to ‘avoid’ the monthly hassle and the burden of them going undergoing sexual violence. Infrastructure according to them doesn’t support disabled people and abortion rights are far-fetched because the community is not even ready to accept them as sexual beings
- Another activist from Iran, shared how big a sin abortion or anything related to it is seen back in their country, so much so that even attending this particular workshop can also be threatening for her. Despite such hurdles activists are working towards spreading as much awareness regarding contraception and how to avoid pregnancies, but many have to pay the price of freedom for the same. Iranian government has been controlling reproduction through their family planning for more than 8 years now and they don’t plan on making safe abortion easily accessible to women.
- From India we had someone working in Goa, with the organization called Human Touch, who directly worked with people living with HIV/AIDS which is a big taboo in their community. She shared how marriages are conducted within those suffering from HIV to keep it a secret. When it comes to abortion two biggest barriers remain the social and health factors due to several myths and stigma associated with it.

## Session 9: Politics of the Internet and using Social Media effectively

Carrying forward from our earlier conversation on importance of communication we delved into the most obviously and easily available medium for all change makers which is the internet and social media.

We discussed what is a ‘Feminist Internet’ in today’s context where it should be an extension of our resistance movements in other spaces, public and private. Internet not only plays an important role in challenging the patriarchal voices that cloud it but is also a very

important medium for sharing information far and quickly, therefore it becomes important to claim these spaces and diversify the content by giving voices to the marginalized communities and genders. Apart from all this the internet also serves as an important place for mobilizing people across paradigms for any action or cause.

Having said all this, internet also poses a lot of challenges for SRHR activists, with limited access being the most basic one but also being an easy platform for perpetrating verbal and mental harassment. Apart from that as was discussed in our previous sessions surveillance still poses a big threat to anonymity of a lot of women who may face threats for sharing a particular thought or message.

## Session 10: Creating Content

Having discussed in detail the politics of internet and social media, participants were highly motivated to create some interesting and even humorous content for sharing, that would take our message across in a language which was most relatable to the youth fighting for gender equality and reproductive rights of women.

Many of the participants used the current popular medium of memes, which is a good example of subversion tactic because for many decades problematic humour that is often sexist has remained popular, but now feminists are increasingly using these memes on social media to turn this language and mock patriarchy in its all forms. Some very creative videos were also made, along with Asmita contributing through another spoof of a popular song that overturned its language to suit our messaging and values.



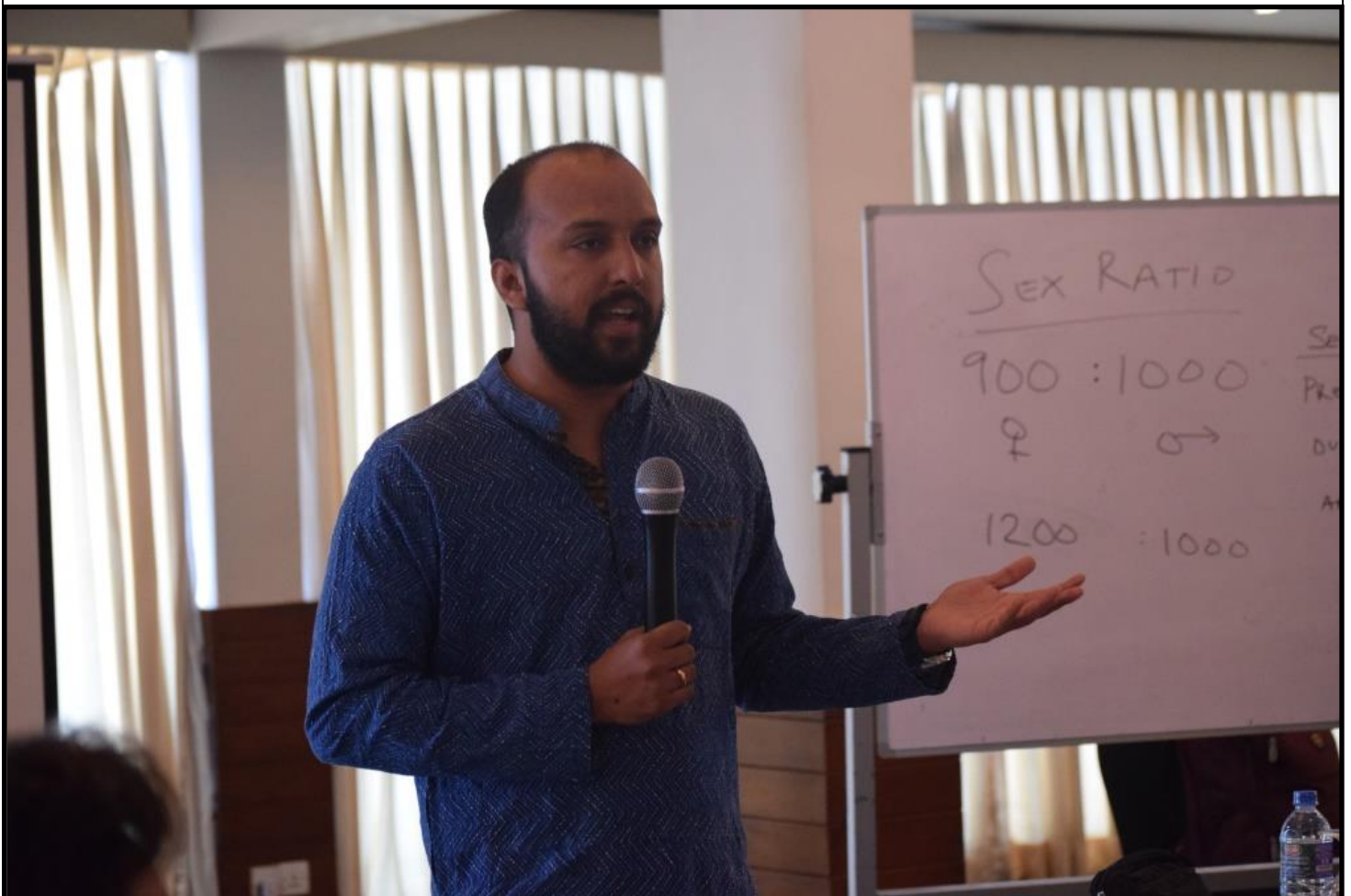


## DAY 4, THURSDAY, 14<sup>TH</sup>

Recap of our previous day involved some of the following feedbacks

- Learned that politics online and offline inform each other as people who are usually online feel they are safe when they are not and hence should be more aware.
- Session on communication was the most important as it's the most critical for us advocates.
- We need to be mindful of our content shared on social media but at the same time should use subversion and reach out to more networks of people.
- For me the intersectionality session especially with regards to abortion rights for women living with disabilities was a big reality check.

### Session 11: Setting up a youth forum



This session was facilitated by our very own Youth Champion from Sri Lanka Mr Dakshita Wickramaratne who talked to the participants about the importance of networking and the important role that the youth has to play in this. He explained this by sharing their own example of YANSL and how it was set up by a bunch of active and passionate youth advocates initially with support of organizations locally and internationally working on the issue of safe abortion and where it has reached currently, successfully managing awareness drives and achieving the targets they had set for themselves.



He divided the participants into 2 groups, with one talking about the advantages of networking while the other talking about disadvantages for the same. After the group had finished discussion some of the insights that were shared were

#### Advantages

- Increased communication leading to learning from different contexts and experiences

- Widening of the resource base which would include more mentors, materials and volunteers/manpower
- Different skills sets along with more leverage for existing resources
- Ensures constant support and also increases accountability

#### Disadvantages

- Possible clash of nature because of too many cooks
- Risk management gets tricky online and offline
- Distribution of responsibility requires constant checks and balances to be in place
- Sustainability remains an issues, especially with regards to funding

### Session 12: Using Social Networking Platforms

Having understood the importance of mobilizing and networking we divided the participants into groups based on their regional convenience and asked them to share their idea of networking along with a possible strategy for how that network can be best put to use if we wanted to create a youth forum.



All participants had a lot to share from their experience and knowledge of extensively working in their respective regions and networks of organizations and authorities. Some examples for the same are also shared below:

#### India

- 3 organizations that were present and can possibly work towards a combined network were YP Foundation, Feminism in India and Love Matters India.
- Their idea focussed on working in rural areas and spreading awareness on abortion through their volunteers and activists while also building connection with organizations locally working on the issue

#### Bangladesh

- Since abortion is a taboo issue we can start talking about it by taking in confidence the correct media along with some influencers like celebrities and social media personalities who have a large following
- Each time during elections, the government suddenly starts to care about issues it otherwise doesn't bother itself with, but it is always a good opportunity to bank on and if nothing bring the issue to their attention

#### Sri Lanka

- Activists are already in the process of identifying and building relationship with organizations working on safe abortion.
- Working with a combination of local NGOs like Women in Need, Feminist Catholic Network, Praja Padama, DABINDU, Smurdhi which is working in rural areas and international NGOs like UNFPA, UNDP, Chrysalis, Rotary and Rotaract who can work on ground and help in spreading awareness
- It is also important to work with the state and the media to make noise regarding the issue who have to be tilted towards social empowerment and welfare of its citizens



After all the participants shared their strategies and network idea we moved on to the last session of our 4 day workshop which was the valedictory session and where certificates were awarded to all the new Youth Champions.



We also had a very interesting 'Rainbow Shoot' with the backdrop of the beautiful Indian Ocean, which celebrated the diverse and vibrant charm of the group, representing different issues and voices from across Asia



# Annexure

## Agenda

Day One 11<sup>th</sup> December

Timings	Session	Learning objectives	Facilitators
9.00 am-9.30 am		Welcome and Objectives, introductions, expectations, pre-assessment	Suchitra Dalvie, Shilpa Shroff Priskila Arulpragasam
9.30 am – 11.00 am	<b><u>Session 1:</u></b> Understanding Gender and Patriarchy and its linkages with safe abortion issues	Objective: At the end of this session the participants should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the difference between sex and gender.</li> <li>• Understand the social construct of gender and the role of patriarchy in perpetuating the gender inequalities.</li> <li>• Understand the cascade effects this has on the differential control over resources and decision-making powers.</li> </ul>	Manisha Gupte
11.00 am -11.30		Tea break	
11.30-12.00		Gender stereotyping in mass media	Aisha Nazim, YANSL
12.00am -1.00 pm	<b><u>Session 2:</u></b> Human rights, sexual and reproductive rights.	Objective: At the end of this session the participants should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know the definition of sexual and reproductive rights and the linkages with other rights in upholding them.</li> <li>• Understand the significance of the paradigm shift at the ICPD, from demographic goals to individual reproductive rights.</li> <li>• Obtain clarity on the rights-based perspective</li> </ul>	Manisha Gupte

		towards safe abortion.	
1.00-2.00 pm	Lunch Break		
2 -3.30 p.m.	<b><u>Session 3:</u></b> Values Clarification and Case Studies	Objective: At the end of this session the participants should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appreciate the impact social 'values' can have on individual rights</li> <li>• Understand the nuances of policy interpretations being enabling or disabling</li> </ul>	Facilitated by Suchitra Dalvie and Manisha Gupte
3.30-4 pm	Tea Break		
4-4.30 pm		Power walk and intersectionalities	Lakmini Prabani Perera
<b><u>Reception dinner in national costumes and photoshoot</u></b>			

### Day Two –Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> December

8:00 – 8:30	Recap and review		
8.30 a.m. - 10.30 am	<b><u>Session 4:</u></b> Basic updates on reproduction, contraception, safe abortion.	Objective: At the end of this session the participants should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand how pregnancy occurs and how it can be prevented</li> <li>• Clarify myths and misconceptions around these issues</li> <li>• Explain safe abortion techniques and related concerns in simple language to a layperson</li> </ul>	Suchitra Dalvie
10.30 am – 11.00 am	Tea Break		
11.00 am -1.00 pm		Objective: At the end of this session the participants should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the implications of the law and its impact on services</li> <li>• Understand the barriers</li> </ul>	Shilpa Shroff



		created by laws and practices to safe abortion services	
1.00-2.00 pm	Lunch		
2. pm - 3.00 pm	<b><u>Session 6:</u></b> What does it mean to be prochoice?	Objective: At the end of this session the participants should be able to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for safe abortion as a choice and a right for women (sex selection as an issue)</li> <li>• Understand the role of subversion</li> </ul>	Suchitra Dalvie
3.00 pm -4.00 pm	<b><u>Assorted clips</u></b>	For discussion immediately afterwards	
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	Tea Break		
4.30 pm –5:00 pm		Papaya workshop	Suchitra Dalvie
5pm - 7pm	<b><u>Session 3:</u></b> Film screening	Dirty Dancing	
6.30 pm – 9.00 pm		Strategic Planning and M&E	

### Day Three – Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December

<b>8-8.30 am</b>	Recap and review	Discussion of last night's movie	
8:30 am – 9.30 am	<b><u>Session 7:</u></b> Interpersonal communication	Objective: At the end of this session the participants should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the communication loop and the importance of message and medium, body language and other non-verbal cues, the importance of obtaining</li> </ul>	Shilpa Shroff, Sarah Soysa

		feedback	
9.30 am to 10.30 am	<b><u>Session 8:</u></b> Discussion on intersectionalities: Disabilities, migrants, refugees		Banafsheh Jamali Gharaehtspeh, Iran: Political regimes issues  Zarghoona Wadood, Pakistan: Disability rights  Sibyl Helena Placida Fernandes, India on Abortion Access for HIV Positive women.
10.30- 11.00		Tea Break	
11.00 am - 1.00 pm	<b><u>Session 9:</u></b>	Politics of the internet and using Social Media effectively	Shilpa Shroff, Ayesha Bashir
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm	Lunch break		
2- 4.00 pm	<b><u>Session 10:</u></b> Creating Content	Objective: At the end of the session participants understand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What effective communication entails</li> <li>• How to produce content: curating and creating</li> <li>• How to create media forms used for the web, including blogs, videos, photos and audio slideshows.</li> </ul>	Shilpa Shroff , Ayesha Bashir
<b><u>Photoshoot for Humans of ASAP</u></b>			

### Day Four- Friday 14<sup>th</sup> December

8-8.30 am	<b>Recap</b>		
8.30 - 9.30		Critique of articles	Suchitra Dalvie
9.30 – 11	<b><u>Session 11:</u></b>	Setting up a youth forum	Dakshitha Wickramarahtne YANSL  Suchitra and Shilpa
11- 11.30	Tea Break		
11.30- 12.30	Session 12: Using social networking platforms	Objectives: At the end of the session participants understand how to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use social media as a networking tool</li> <li>• Use social media as an advocacy tool</li> <li>• Become credited, contributors to ASAP's social media</li> </ul>	Suchitra, Dakshitha Wickramarahtne, Shilpa  Create your network chart
12.30- 1		Valedictory and closing	
1.00- 2.00 pm	Lunch break and end of the YAI		

## APPENDIX

### Participants, Country

Samiul Islam - BANGLADESH
Ugyen Dema - BHUTAN
Banafsheh JamaliGharaehtspeh - IRAN
Pallavi Agarwal - INDIA
Ms Asmita Ghosh - INDIA
Khushboo Goel- INDIA
SIBYL HELENA PLACIDA FERNANDES- INDIA
Dewi Astrini Larasati Pelealu- INDONESIA
Tan Fok Jun (Jeremy) –MALAYSIA
Hema Darshini Thirunama Karasu- MALAYSIA
Sangeetha Permalsamy- MALAYSIA
Shristi Shakya- NEPAL
Bandana Upreti- NEPAL



Joshua Dilawar- PAKISTAN
Sarmad Soomar- PAKISTAN
Zarghoona Wadood- PAKISTAN
Abbygail F. Dupale- PHILIPPINES
Kristian Ed Geonanga- PHILIPPINES
SARRYNA GESITE- SRI LANKA
Desaree Soysa – SRI LANKA
Fathima Nadiya Azmy – SRI LANKA
Sarani Chathurika Ranaweera- SRI LANKA
Tharindi P. Devasurendra – SRI LANKA
Trang Ha Nguyen- VIETNAM