



YOUTH CHAMPIONS ADVOCACY NEPAL

Annual Report, 2017



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Message from the President

It gives me sense of deep sense of satisfaction in presenting you our report. As we look back our journey so far, we feel like yesterday that we started and it's been 2 years that we have been working towards united as team for the change that we seek.

The report you are reading is just a snapshot of the energy and creativity and enthusiasm as well as very hard work put in by so many youth champions in Nepal and other stakeholders who have directly and indirectly helped us to work towards our goal.

Abortion has been legalized in Nepal now for more than 14 years but the stigma still prevails. Gender stereotyping and discrimination of women creates obstacles for them to access contraceptive and abortion services. It is impossible to imagine and create a stigma free society; where every woman in the country irrespective of their age, marital status, gender identities, ethnicity, economic status and place of origin would have access to SRHR as their fundamental right free from coercion, violence and discrimination; without understanding the root cause of stigma i.e patriarchy and gender based differences.

Also, the collaboration of the stake holders in reducing these barriers in elimination of such deeply rooted practices is equally crucial to amplify our voices. Understanding the importance of integration and collaboration, we have worked with youths, health care providers, media persons, female community health volunteers, medical students, academicians and other concerned stakeholders for promoting, protecting and advancing the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls and in Nepal particularly the access to safe abortion services.

As this year draws to a close, we can look back on it with satisfaction and look forward to 2018 with high expectations and renewed energy to continue our work with our amazing members, partners, supporters and collaborator.



Smriti Thapa
President
Youth CAN

Organizational Background

Who we are?

Youth Champions Advocacy Nepal (Youth CAN) was formalized on 17th Jan, 2015 with the mentorship and support of the Asia Safe Abortion Partnership (ASAP) to ensure young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights by promoting access to safe abortion as a right.

Youth CAN aims to serve as a forum for information, experience sharing and exchange of ideas, strategic thinking and planning for a collective vision aimed towards advocacy of safe abortion services, enhances collaboration and cooperation among organizations and institutions involved in young people's SRHR issues especially issues surrounding safe abortion services.

It aims to do so by its working on advocacy and research on SRHR, documentation, networking with organization of similar interest and by promoting leadership and capacity building of its members. With the support of its mentor organization for the past four years, youth champions have been working in the area creating projects and awareness surrounding safe abortion. They have reached a wide network of audience from media person to the health care providers in visualizing safe abortion through gender lens.

Vision

Youth Champions Advocacy Nepal envisions a society where every people especially women and girls can enjoy their sexual and reproductive health and rights as outlined in human right documents.

Goal

To promote, protect and advance sexual and reproductive health and rights of people especially of women and girls in Nepal by promoting and establishing access to safe abortion service as human right.

Objectives

1. To serve as a form for information, experience sharing and exchange of ideas, strategic thinking and planning for a collective vision aimed towards safe abortion services
2. To increase the capacities of the network and its members to advocate and network for access to safe abortion as a human right in national and global spaces.
3. To aware young people regarding sexual and reproductive health and rights through youth advocacy programs.

4. To work with concerned national agencies and stake holders to make them accountable to address the sexual and reproductive health and rights of people especially of women and girls through various gender friendly policies and programs.
5. To increase visibility of a right based approach to safe abortion at local, regional and global forums (physical as well as media spaces).
6. To create sensitization program in the community especially at the grassroots levels regarding the network work and safe abortion advocacy.

Key Organizational Activities

- **National Level Youth Advocacy Institute**

With the support from ASAP, we have organized two advocacy Institute for Youth Champions so far, first YAI was held in 29th September 2015. A total of 13 youths from the country participated in the advocacy institute which was scheduled for 3 days and second YAI was held on 14-16th September. A total of 16 youths from the country participated in the second youth advocacy institute which was held from 14th to 16th September, 2017.



Read the detailed report here: http://asap-asia.org/pdf/FINAL_REPORT_YAI.pdf



- **Country Seminar**

With the support from Asia Safe Abortion Partnership, Youth Champions Advocacy Network Nepal (Youth CANN) organized its first country seminar on 20th May, 2016 in Kathmandu to bolster Youth CANN mission in advancing the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women with especial focus on promoting access to safe abortion services as human right in Nepal.

This seminar aimed to build an important platform to bring together youth women activists, organizations and other diverse stakeholders, including government representatives at national level to discuss on addressing challenges and exploring opportunities within Safe Abortion Advocacy. The overall purpose was to formally introduce the Youth Champions Advocacy Network in Nepal to others stake holders working for safe abortion advocacy. Furthermore, also to disseminate information, experience sharing and exchange of ideas, strategic thinking and planning for a collective vision aimed towards safe abortion services and finally to have enhanced collaboration and cooperation within organizations and institutions working for strengthening SRHR of Nepalese women.



Report available here: <http://asap-asia.org/pdf/FINAL-REPORT-COUNTRY-SEMINAR.pdf>

- **Sensitizing the Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs)**

Female Community Health Volunteers Program was implemented in 1988, since its inception, FCHVs have served as frontline local health resource persons who provide community-based health education and services in rural areas, with a special focus on maternal and child health and family planning. Realizing their vital role, a one day sensitization program for the Female Community Health Volunteers on Safe Abortion was conducted by two Youth Champions, Bonita Sharma and Bidhya Basnet in Dumkauli on the 29th December, 2015. The program content included the “must know” information for FCHVs like; understanding safe abortion through gender lens and not merely as a medical procedure, safe abortion and legal condition for safe abortion services in Nepal, consequences of unsafe abortion, referral mechanism and cost requirement for safe abortion, post abortion contraceptive and its importance, stigmas and other barriers in accessing safe abortion services and the role of FCHVs in reducing them etc.



Read here <http://asap-asia.org/blog/talking-about-abortion-with-nepals-female-community-health-volunteers/#sthash.xZJ8iTGW.dpbs>

Reckoning the importance of orienting the grassroots level health workers, Youth CAN conducted another Sensitization Program for FCHVs on Safe Abortion in coordination with Primary Health Centre, Lubhu of Lalitpur district on 4th September, 2017. A total number of 25 participants were oriented in the program (25 FCHVs from Imadol, Tikathali, Siddipur and Lamatar).



FCHV being a change agent in their local area can effectively circulate the information received through this program to those adolescent girls and women who are in need of these services or seeking professional services regarding their sexual and reproductive health.

- **Video Documentary:**

The 'Women For Women' video documentary is a part of small grant project supported by Asia Safe Abortion Partnership (ASAP) in which Youth Champions from Nepal, Bonita Sharma and Bidhya Basnet conducted a sensitization program on Safe Abortion targeting the Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs) with major focus on the issue of safe abortion in Dumkauli, Nawalparasi district. The video depicts journey of youth champions in an effort to bring about positive change in the area by empowering the grass root level health workers – the FCHVs.

Link to the documentary: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DmoUB3ylkKg>



- **Orientation for medical professionals - Project Prayas**

This project was created with an intention to broaden the access to the information available about safe abortion, as well as to relate it with Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights. Three youth champions were assigned to first carry out a day long sensitization workshop, in which medical and paramedical students would be able to learn about the current scenario of right to safe abortion practices in Nepal, as well as the legality behind certain technicalities that arise in the course of an unwanted pregnancy. Keeping sustainability in mind, the target group was made to include only enthusiastic individuals who would be highly receptive towards the information provided and be able to reproduce the knowledge in order to educate other individuals not part of the medical field.



- **Youth CAN as Reproductive Health Right Working Group**

Youth CAN is a part of the larger network **Reproductive Health Right Working Group** (RHRWG) that works for reproductive justice in Nepal and help build the ethics of working together for larger cause.

With the support of some of the mentors from the Reproductive health Right Working Group, we were able to acquire the membership and help contribute for celebrating National safe abortion week which coincides with International day of action on safe abortion i.e. September 28. As a member of RHRWG, Youth CANN participated in various national level meetings, discussions and media interaction programs to advocate for people access to safe abortion and help them exercise sexual and reproductive health and rights as outlined in various international and national legal frameworks to achieve universal access to SRHR as outlined in sustainable development goals. We also helped with the first series of the publication of Reproductive health right group called as SAHAYATRA 2073 (JOURNEY TOGETHER) was published on safe abortion day.



- **Media Orientation Programs**

Due to lack of information, social stigma and fear of being exposed, they are less willing to seek family planning services to prevent unwanted pregnancy and those unwanted pregnancies are terminated unsafely by unskilled providers. So, the message that abortion has been legalized and that women can get safe abortion service from the government and other private listed facilities should be disseminated to women. As media plays a vital role in communicating such messages to mass audience, Youth Champion Minal



Singh conducted an orientation program for 12 media person to sensitize them on their role in promoting women's reproductive rights in Nepal.

A one day advocacy for Media personnel from major print Medias, televisions, radios and online was conducted at Union House, Kathmandu on 17th January, 2016 by the Youth CANN in collaboration with Media Advocacy Group (MAG). Organizing advocacy program for media can increase the visibility of Youth CAN. Being a startup network, it is very important to expand our presence to let people know youth network such as ours that work in safe abortion rights exist. Starting with media sensitization will grow our connection with different media people is of great advantage.



News coverage about the event: <http://www.nepalihealth.com/2016/01/18/2678/>

- **Safe Abortion Through Gender Lens**

Youth Champions Smriti Thapa and Anu Thapa organized a one day Sensitization Program for young nurse/midwives and doctors. The objective of the program was to visualize abortion through gender lens, thus further motivating them to provide more culturally congruent and women centered rights based abortion care. The number of participants including the facilitator was 32. The key issues discussed were gender and sex highlighting the issue of sex selection and the patriarchal society, sexual and reproductive health and rights, unsafe abortion worldwide, and what it means to be pro-choice.



- **Journal Klub**

One of the initial activities that we have started is Journal Klub. This initiative have attempted to bring the youth champions together at least once in every week (for now), and to create the environment of collective sharing. The Journal Klub will help to bring uniformity in knowledge and understand on SRHR and related topics among the youth champions. It also aims to bring the SRHR and safe abortion activists together to strengthen the momentum of advocacy in Nepal.



- **Video Competition**

Deepa Pradhan and Puja Karki collaboratively organized a two days training and a video making competition with technical support from MSI/SPN. The program aimed to sensitize a group of youths on safe abortion as a fundamental human right, to articulate legalization of safe abortion and situation of safe abortion services in Nepal, to utilize video as a tool on social media to support safe abortion as SRHR and human right issue. Total number of participants was 25.



- **Peer Education for Capacity building and Advocacy on Sexual Reproductive Health and rights and Safe Abortion**

Youth Champions SaruShilpakar and ShreejanaBajracharya jointly organized a Peer Education Workshop on Capacity Building and Advocacy on SRHR and Safe Abortion. The workshop aimed at empowering youths (aged 15-24) to make informed decisions and choices regarding their SRHR and increase access to discuss and share young people's thoughts and problems. Total 15 youths participated in the workshop.

- **Youth For Choice – A campaign to aware students on Safe Abortion**

Many students are still unaware about the legal provision of abortion in Nepal and available safe abortion services in various health center. So, as a part of youth for choice campaign, Youth CAN has been conducting school/college based awareness programs mainly focusing on adolescent’s sexual and reproductive health, conception, pregnancy and safe abortion rights.



- **Campaigns**

As stated in our mission to work in close collaboration with government, other stake holders and youth networks in advancing the sexual and reproductive health and rights of people especially of women and girls with especial focus on promoting access to safe abortion services as human right in Nepal, we have been collaborating with various stake holders to celebrate SEPTEMBER 28 in larger scale.

Youth Champion Advocacy Network Nepal (Youth CANN) participated in the candle light ceremony organized on the special occasion of International day of action on safe abortion, remembering all those who lost their lives due to unsafe abortion.



Youth CAN started social media buzz in September 2016 and 2017 for the September 28 campaign in Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and blogs. Members engaged in discussions, preparing and sharing online content and stories, factsheets on the importance of

September 28 highlighting the themes. Blogs were written highlighting the issue of rising media stigmatization on safe abortion and ways how we can work together to enhance the awareness and build a positive discourse surrounding safe abortion services.



Youth CAN also submitted video for the open call submission by Youth Coalition on Sexual and Reproductive Rights surrounding the stigma to access safe abortion. Though our video wasn't selected but it was used for the twitter rally on September 28. We made another promotional campaign video for Youth CANN pledge to increase awareness and access to safe abortion.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=blihiCWAfOE>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EuPTsLLiOi8>

- **Youth CAN in National and International Forum**

Youth champions organize and represent the network at various stake holders meeting, seminar, conference to include the youth voice and meaningful participation in safe abortion advocacy.

Youth CANN participated in an event called DEBUNKING MYTH organized by Creasion Nepal. Youth CANN took opportunity to raise awareness and debunk the various stereotypical myths surrounding abortion and highlight on how these stereotypes restrict access to safe and legal



abortion. Further facilitating the conversations to help point out and address commonalities and systemic issues surrounding safe and legal abortion, while also normalizing the experience.

Smriti Thapa, President of Youth CAN was invited to the United Nations Human Rights Council as panelist on panel discussion on "Women's rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: health and gender equality", as a part of its annual full day discussion on the human rights of women, on 13 June 2017, in Geneva, Switzerland.

[http://unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/\(httpNewsByYear_en\)/CC3B768DB29BA09DC125813E0054208E?OpenDocument](http://unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/(httpNewsByYear_en)/CC3B768DB29BA09DC125813E0054208E?OpenDocument)

She was also invited as co -facilitator for Advocacy in Practice 2.0 that was held prior to 50th session for Commission on population and development in April, 2017, Newyork USA. She was also invited as speaker in panel organized by UNIDO and UN women “Enhancing the productive capacities of women and youth through global partnerships: paving ways to sustainable graduation of LDCs” on May, 2016 Turkey, Antalya.

She was also invited on brown bag session by Harvard School of Public health.

Youth Champions Dr. Prabesh Bikram Singh, was invited as speaker to International conference on Family planning, 2016. He was also selected as young leader for women deliver conference 2016 and also attended global health training in Tanzania. He was also invited as speaker in International AIDS conference, 2016, Durban.

Youth Champion Shreejana Bajracharya participated in International Congress in Women’s Health & Safe Abortion. Likewise, Youth Champion Pushpa Joshi Pradhan was selected as youth scholar for women deliver 16-19 May 2016. She was also selected for Asia pacific feminist forum which was held in Bangkok September 6-9. Youth Champion Bonita Sharma participated and won the Asia Pacific Youth Innovation Challenge competition hosted by UNICEF in November 2016. Other youth champions have also represented Youth CAN at various national and international forum.



Smriti Thapa at United Nations Human Rights Council



Smriti Thapa at panel organized by UNIDO and UN women



Youth Champion Pushpa in Women Deliver Conference



Youth Champion Prabesh in International Family Planning Conference



Youth Champion Shreejana Bajracharya in International Congress in Women's Health & Safe Abortion



Youth Champion Bonita Sharma in Asia Pacific Youth Innovation Challenge

Youth CAN Partner

Asia Safe Abortion Partnership

Website: <http://asap-asia.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AsiaSafeAbortionPartnership/>

Instagram: [safeabortion_asap](https://www.instagram.com/safeabortion_asap)

Twitter: [@asapasia](https://twitter.com/asapasia)



Youth CAN in Social Media Advocacy

- Youth CAN has been actively engaged in social media for advocacy, promotion and awareness on SRHR and safe abortion. Currently, Youth CAN is using social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Blog, Instagram and Youtube for advocacy activities.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/youthcann/>

Twitter: @YouthCANN

Instagram: YouthCAN2017



