Report:

1st ASAP Academy Convening

Venue: Cabbages and Condoms, Bangkok-Thailand

Dates: Pre-Convening Workshops on 20th February Thursday; &

Convening on 21st February (Friday) to 23rd February (Sunday), 2025



Introduction

Asia Safe Abortion Partnership (ASAP) is a network for safe abortion rights. We work across the region and globally to share knowledge and build capacities of safe abortion rights advocates who go on to work in their countries, regionally and globally.

ASAP was founded in 2008 and worked towards building a strong safe abortion rights movement in Asia with members from over 23 countries in the region. Today we have hundreds of members and partner with several organizations and lead from Asia to build a strong safe abortion rights movement in the region and globally.

In February 2024 we hosted the Abortion and Reproductive Justice Conference (ARJC) IV in Mahidol University, Bangkok-Thailand. The conference was attended by about 350 participants from across 65 countries.

ARJC IV reiterated the need for something ASAP already knew and believed in: there is an urgent and critical need for expanding knowledge building platforms for advocates and anyone interested to go deeper into safe abortion rights politics through knowledge that is evidence-based and curated from verified sources, and that explore safe abortion rights from various perspectives but grounded in feminist theory and uses rights-based lens. And most importantly led by trainers who have worked on Safe Abortion Rights and Feminist Movements for decades.

Therefore, ASAP launched the ASAP Academy in 2024 and organized 2 successful semesters (which included several modules that could be taken up individually or as courses such as the foundational course in semester 1 and the foundational and advanced courses in semester 2). The academy was received very well and to deepen the learning from the Academy and also to open up a space for engaging and building solidarities with safe abortion rights advocates and feminist social workers, we organized the ASAP Academy Pre-Convening on 20th February 2025 and the Convening itself from 21st to 23rd February, 2025.

Pre-Convening Workshops, 20th February (Thursday), 2025

ASAP organised a pre-convening workshop with hands-on sessions for Academy alumni and 10 participants were selected to attend the workshop along with a few Steering Committee (SC) members, and Country Advocacy Network (CAN) members.

Dr. Suchitra Dalvie, Coordinator, ASAP, opened the day with a welcome and introduction to ASAP's work over the years, the ASAP Academy since 2024 and the Academy Convening over the next 3 days.

Mahak Agrawal, Communications and Networking Officer and ASAP Academy Facilitator gave an update on the Academy – courses on offer, enrolments and the geographic reach of the academy so far.

Nandini Mazumder, Assistant Coordinator, gave an overview of ASAP's journey since its inception in 2008 and highlighted the importance of the Academy as our latest contribution to the global safe abortion rights movement for a stronger safe abortion rights movement:



Country Advocacy Networks who were present at the pre-convening from Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka presented the work they do to promote greater access to safe abortions in their countries, and also lead regional and global conversations. Each network highlighted their progress, challenges and impact across different areas of their work such as, awareness building, communications campaigns, sensitizing healthcare systems, pushing for greater access to name a few.

The ASAP team then facilitated three hands-on learning activities. The Values Clarification exercise encouraged participants to examine their positions and identify the essential skills needed to advocate for the positions they take. The Last Abortion exercise invited participants to reflect on how they act when given the power to make decisions for others, reinforcing the importance of a rights-based rather than a needs-based approach, even in difficult situations.

All 3 activities led to intense debates and discussions and participants engaged extremely well. It reiterated our belief that while online spaces such as the Academy are extremely important to share knowledge and strengthen the safe abortion rights work, the value of in-person learning cannot be undermined.



1st Academy Convening, 21st February (Fri) to 23rd February (Sun), 2025

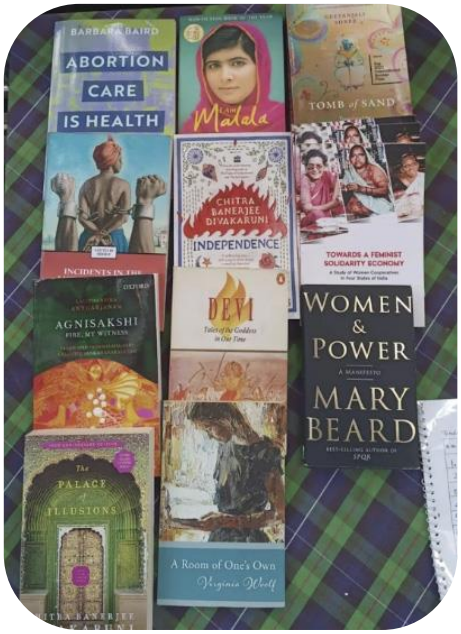


The 1st ASAP Academy Convening brought together around 65 safe abortion rights advocates, health professionals, community organisers, and policy thinkers across Asia and from around the world. The convening provided the space to share knowledge and experiences, learn from each other, build stronger solidarities and reimagine abortion rights discourse in the region and globally.

Held over three days, the event marked an important moment to strengthen safe abortion rights advocacy, share country-level experiences, challenge restrictive regimes, bridge the local and global discourses in SRHRJ and safe abortion rights, and deepen cross-border solidarity in pursuit of accessible, rights-based and stigma-free abortion.

Participants attending the convening came from countries including Australia, Bangladesh Bhutan, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Myanmar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, South Africa, South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, U.K. and a few more countries. The Convening was co-shaped by participants, who shared their experiences and learnings by participating in panels and plenaries, presented in breakout sessions and engaged actively.





Day 1 – Friday, 21st February 2025



Dr. Dalvie welcomed everyone and started the convening by reflecting on ASAP's journey and highlighted several milestones over the years:

- SAHAILEE initiative or the hotlines for Misoprostol use.
- First safe abortion films from Bangladesh (The Drop) and Sri Lanka (It's my right Mr. President).

- Young doctors advocating for gender issues through our Country Advocacy Networks such as ISAY, India and VYAC, Vietnam and others.
- World's first musical drama, 71 to 21, on safe abortion rights rooted in the cultural context in western part of India created in collaboration with MASUM.
- First-ever sign language primer videos on SRHR – an ongoing initiative since 2020. World's first online academy for safe abortion rights started in 2024.
- Launch of the quarterly Safe Abortion Gazette in 2024. (So far there are 6 volumes of the gazette and they are available on our website to download and read.).
- Organizing successfully the world's only safe abortion rights conference, Abortion and Reproductive Justice Conference (ARJC) IV in Mahidol University, Bangkok in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health, Government of Thailand and a local NGO, ARSA, Thailand, in 2024.

Dr. Dalvie then reminded us why we had gathered in 2025 for the Academy Convening, and the critical moment for safe abortion rights that are currently under threat globally.

She handed it over to **Mahak, the Academy Facilitator at ASAP,** and she welcomed all by reminding our purpose for doing what we do with these powerful words: **"Why bother because right now there is someone out there with a wound with the exact shape of your words."** With these powerful words spoken by advocates generations apart and yet connected in their passion towards the same goal, the Academy Convening 2025 took off.

Resistance, Reproductive Rights and Revolutions: Keynote speech by Dr. Subatra Jayaraj, Malaysia



Dr Subatra Jayaraj, ASAP Steering Committee's Chairperson, a service provider and president of the Reproductive Rights Advocacy Alliance Malaysia (RRAAM) was the keynote speaker at the convening and she set the context with these powerful words:

"I am a radical, feminist, medicine woman, in other words I'm a witch. I firmly believe that resistance is not futile, but it is essential."

She reminded us of the current context where we are living in a landscape of global uncertainty, increasing conservatism, growing inequality, and reproductive rights and access to public health care being stripped before our very eyes. It is a particularly critical time for SRHR and abortion rights as in many of our countries reproductive rights are facing socio-political, religious and legal challenges. There is a lack of national commitment to improve policies, or dedicate larger share of budgets to improve access, introduce better technology and expand safe abortion and contraceptive care.

She reminded us the need of the hour is: to keep questioning and pushing boundaries, never settling for the status quo. To collaborate across borders, issues, and identities. She acknowledged that resistance takes bravery, but reminded us that every action whether quiet or loud counts.

Plenary Session: Abortion Seekers
Co-Chairs: Dr. S.P. Choong, Malaysia and Manisha Gupte, India



Zarghoona Wadood from Pakistan Advocacy Network (PAN), ASAP's Country Advocacy Network, delved into the double-layered marginalization faced by women with disabilities, demonstrating how mainstream reproductive rights initiatives have often failed to integrate or

represent their particular realities. She stressed the importance of amplifying these voices, not as an afterthought but as an essential axis for any truly inclusive movement.

Puku from DYISA, ASAP's Country Advocacy Network in Bhutan, shared about the context in Bhutan, a religious country with high degrees of stigma against and fear around gender and sexual diversity that makes it even more challenging to access SRH services. She advocated that the way forward is to build public awareness, advocate for queer affirming healthcare training, strengthen community led change initiatives, push for policy reforms, work collaboratively with country networks who have already done it and channel resources within the country.

Dr. Many from Thailand, shared the several challenges in a relatively more progressive country such as Thailand. Non-profits such as Tamtang, Choices Network and RSA advocate for better services and also support women who need access by providing referrals to healthcare workers.

Soumya Saxena from Action Aid, India, shared about the difficulties faced by minors who need access to abortions. It is particularly difficult for young pregnant girls to access justice and safe abortion services as any sexual act before 18 years of age is deemed as statutory rape and her consent does not count. In this situation Action Aid, India, provides critical services and since 2014 around 7000 women have received shelter in their centres.

Plenary Session: Abortion Providers
Co-Chairs: Vivek Bokka, India and Angela Dawson, Australia

This session focused on the structural, political, and systemic challenges that hinder access to safe abortion. Speakers from diverse contexts presented and provided insights into patriarchy within medical systems, inequitable access, and the politicization of reproductive health.

Khushi from ISAY, India, ASAP's Country Advocacy Network led by medical students in India, spoke on Sexism in Medicine and began by examining the historical roots of sexism in medicine. From ancient Greece where women were deemed "deformed males" to the modern-day dismissal of women's pain, systemic gender bias continues to shape reproductive healthcare. Khushi called for the de-medicalization of abortion and highlighted how private sector discrimination against marginalized groups further deepens inequities.

Ignatia shared the experience of YONI, ASAP's Country Advocacy Network and a youth-led SRHR initiative in Indonesia, where abortion is legal only under medical emergencies. Despite this, 11% of maternal mortality can be attributed to unsafe abortions, with most cases concentrated on Java Island. YONI plans to expand training sessions and build an alumni network for midwifery advocacy.

Sihle, representing the SRJC (with 160 member organizations), contextualized abortion in South Africa. She shared the legal framework and that in 1996 CTOP Act made abortion fully legal. Sihle stressed the importance of moving from legality to real-world access, especially for Black, Indigenous, and queer communities.

Dr. Choong, Malaysia, critically analysed the misuse of conscientious objection (CO) in reproductive health. He reminded us the need to normalize abortion through de-medicalization, promoting medical abortion pills via telemedicine, and empowering women with knowledge of their rights.


Building stronger
solidarities
towards radical
change
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SAFE
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FOR ALL!

Session on Service Delivery Systems, Break Out Rooms (2 to 3.30 PM)



Break Out Room 1: **Co-Chairs: Zarghoona Wadood, Pakistan and Nandini Mazumder, India**

Breakout Room 1 brought together diverse voices working on the frontlines of safe abortion advocacy across Asia. The session illuminated the deeply entrenched legal, medical, and social barriers to abortion access—especially for people navigating unplanned pregnancies, gender diversity, marginalization, and restrictive national laws.

Ika Aayu from Indonesia began the session by describing her work at Samsara, an organization that offers counselling and information to those facing unplanned pregnancies. Operating a hotline that provides guidance on abortion pills, Samsara plays a critical role in bridging the gap between legal restrictions and the needs of abortion seekers. The experience reaffirmed the importance of trained hotline counsellors and the need for integrated referral pathways for later abortions.

Sumit Pawar from India, founder of the QKnit Foundation in India, shifted the discussion to the intersection of abortion access and LGBTQIA+ rights. QKnit is a queer-led network that advocates for safe campuses, inclusive education, and visibility of trans and non-binary individuals in sexual and reproductive health services. Sumit's account demonstrated that abortion access is not just a women's issue but it is a queer, caste, class, and disability issue, too.

Thant, an OB-GYN, from Myanmar and now living and working in Thailand, presented an alarming overview of the medical and legal context in which doctors are trained. In Myanmar, abortion is only permitted to save the life of the pregnant woman. Thant's presentation underscored how medical education, heavily influenced by religious beliefs and patriarchy, perpetuates misinformation and discrimination against women seeking abortions.

Madhusha Pannigala from Sri Lanka, a child protection officer, shared compelling stories of unsafe abortion among vulnerable women in the Moratuwa division. Through focus group discussions with community members, she found that many women underwent unsafe abortions due to lack of

knowledge, stigma, and absence of accessible services. She called for greater involvement from local public health institutions and sustained awareness campaigns that challenge stigma at the grassroots level.

The Q&A segment allowed for deeper engagement with the audience. Speakers offered honest insights into how they navigate legal risks, community backlash, and institutional resistance. Feminism, they noted, is not just about reproductive rights and it must also be anti-war, anti-caste, anti-racist, and deeply inclusive.

Break Out Room 2: Co-Chairs: Khushi Singh & Asika Ghemosu

This session brought together speakers from Poland, Bhutan, Thailand, and India, who reflected on how abortion access intersects with religion, healthcare policy, patriarchy, and national crises. Each speaker contributed grounded, often deeply personal insights into how they or their organizations are working to navigate and transform highly stigmatized and restricted environments.

Lucia Berro Pizzarossa, representing Women Help Women in Poland, opened the session with a sobering account of abortion access in one of Europe's most restrictive countries. Despite strict legal barriers, she reported that approximately 700 abortions occur each day in Poland and this is an estimate that reflects the depth of both demand and resistance. Despite this hostility, Lucia emphasized that the organization continues to provide high-quality, stigma-free care, with local "active agents" helping spread life-saving information within their communities.

Next**, Ugyen Chophel from DYISA, Bhutan** discussed the layered complexity of abortion in a country where religious and cultural beliefs are tightly interwoven with public policy. In a nation of only 770,000 people, the average birth rate has dropped to 1.4 per woman. As a student in Bhutan, Ugyen noted the widespread absence of basic abortion education and called for more honest, inclusive discussions about reproductive rights.

Chonthita Kraisrikul from Thailand, an abortion counsellor and advocate with Tamtang and Choices Network in Thailand, brought a unique dual perspective, both as a professional and someone with lived experience. Since 2021, abortion has been legal in Thailand up to 20 weeks without the need for a medical justification. She recommended expanding these services, correcting misinformation among healthcare workers, and broadening public support to ensure that reproductive rights are extended to all regardless of nationality or socioeconomic status.

The final speaker, **Mukta Kamble from India**, painted a vivid picture of how patriarchy continues to govern women's bodies in rural regions. Her presentation began with a haunting image: a woman's hand bearing the names of six male family members, symbolizing the control they exert over her choices. These stories reveal the stark reality that many women in India still face: abortion is not just a medical procedure, but a social negotiation shaped by gender, caste, education, and economic survival.

The session ended with a deep discussion on the role of religion and public perception. Participants reflected on how religious texts, such as the Quran, offer more flexibility around abortion than many governments acknowledge. The session served as a powerful reminder that legal reforms alone are not enough; advocacy must also address misinformation, stigma, and the structural violence embedded in society.

This powerful session highlighted the deeply entrenched barriers to safe abortion access across different geographies in East Indonesia, Uruguay, Bangladesh, and the broader Muslim world, while also exploring the importance of language, accessibility, and cultural history in dismantling abortion

stigma. Each speaker presented grounded case studies and nuanced reflections that exposed both the violence of institutional systems and the transformative potential of community-led solutions

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Plenary Session: Challenges
Co-Chairs: Shreejana Bajracharya, Nepal and Jedidah Maina, Kenya

Mitra Kadarsih, YONI, Indonesia, ASAP's Country Advocacy Network, opened the session with an insightful presentation on abortion access in East Indonesia. Although abortion is legally permitted under strict conditions—such as in cases where the woman's life is at risk or if the pregnancy results from rape—these exceptions are narrow and insufficient in practice. Mitra called for urgent reforms including decriminalization, expanded education, and deinstitutionalization of abortion services.

Lucia Berro Pizzarossa brought a comparative perspective from Uruguay, where abortion was legalized in 2012 up to 12 weeks of gestation. Although the law on paper appears progressive, she argued that its implementation remains deeply flawed and often violent. Lucia emphasized that the true violence lies not in the act of abortion, but in the obstacle's society and the state place in its path.

Nujhat Jahan Khan from YouthAID, Bangladesh, ASAP's Country Advocacy Network in Bangladesh, offered a deeply symbolic presentation titled "Who Gets the Chicken Leg?", drawing attention to how gendered denial of choices infiltrates even the most mundane aspects of life. In most South Asian cultures and in Bangladesh women often don't get the choicest piece of meat at the dinner table, and in this context, Nujhat asked us to reflect on how could they then expect to control decisions about their own bodies? Nujhat advocated for family-based interventions, community education, and the return of abortion services to non-institutional community settings.

Sarah Abbas, representing Adiyah Collective, U.K., brought an often-silenced conversation to the forefront: abortion within Muslim communities. Her presentation, "Abortion is Halal", challenged dominant narratives that falsely claim Islam forbids abortion. Her work with doulas aims to de-

institutionalize abortion by training culturally competent care providers who can support Muslim individuals navigating reproductive decisions with dignity and spiritual affirmation.

Ayesha Bashir, Communications and Networking Manager, ASAP, the final speaker, brought attention to a critical and often overlooked aspect of abortion access: disability inclusion. Focusing on deaf individuals, she asked whether sign language users are truly being included in SRHR conversations. Her work calls for investment in accessible resources, interpreter training, and disability-inclusive advocacy at all levels.

During the Q&A session, participants asked important questions about accompaniment support, doula training, the role of the law in shaping social norms, and the recognition of sign language in medical systems. Sarah shared that Adiyah Collective provides both abortion and postpartum support where geographically feasible. Ayesha added that while sign language may slow conversations, it is necessary and deeply meaningful.

Closing keynote - Decriminalization and After: The fight to eradicate the deep roots of criminalization by Na Young, SHARE, South Korea
Co-Chair: Puku, Bhutan & Dr. Suchitra Dalvie, India

Na Young, a long-time activist and advocate with SHARE in South Korea, delivered a deeply reflective and provocative closing keynote speech and concluded the powerful day 1 of the Academy Convening. She shared the journey that led to the complete decriminalisation of abortion in South Korea which was a process that began with a petition in 2019 and culminated in a legal victory in 2021.

Despite the legislative milestone, safe and affordable abortion is still largely inaccessible in the country's public health system. Na Young recounted the tragic story of a 19-year-old girl who died in 2012 following an abortion surgery. This loss was a haunting reminder that legality alone is insufficient without safety, affordability, and stigma-free services.

Na Young highlighted how, even after decriminalisation, stigma continued to dominate the medical landscape. Many doctors still accept payments in cash to avoid creating a legal paper trail. As a result, some doctors have refused to take on abortion cases, fearing charges of homicide.

She emphasized that decriminalisation is not the end goal and it is only the beginning. What's needed now is the development of a compassionate, rights-based medical system supported by trained, sensitive professionals. Access to abortion care should be grounded in counselling, informed decision-making, and financial assistance and not limited to advocating for arbitrary legal cutoffs.

In her closing remarks, Na Young powerfully stated that it was not the government that led the change, but it was the people. The demand for justice, bodily autonomy, and reproductive freedom came from the ground up, from activists, survivors, and communities who refused to be silent.



Day 2 – Saturday, 22nd February 2025
Opening Keynote Address by Manisha Gupte, senior feminist activist, co-founder of MASUM and lead trainer at ASAP Institutes and Academy **Co-Chairs: Dr. Subatra Jayraj, Malaysia & Ayesha Bashir, India**

T**he convening opened with a powerful keynote by Manisha Gupte,** who offered a sweeping and urgent reflection on the political, economic, and cultural landscapes shaping reproductive rights today. Framed against a backdrop of growing authoritarianism, shrinking civil space, and escalating global conservatism, her remarks invited participants to confront both structural oppression and internalized norms that threaten bodily autonomy across contexts.

Manisha began by addressing the current global climate, where political developments, such as the return of figures like Donald Trump, have emboldened regressive ideologies worldwide. In this tightening atmosphere, reproductive justice faces unprecedented challenges. This is not merely a political issue but it is a deeply personal crisis for millions.

She characterized the present as an era of conservative retrenchment and rising fascism. Increasingly, activists are fearful not just for themselves but for their families. Yet she urged the audience to recognize that such stories are not isolated; they mirror the realities of countless women facing reproductive injustice daily.

Turning to the economic dimensions of the struggle, Manisha laid bare the devastating impact of global funding cuts on reproductive health. As resources dwindle, it becomes nearly impossible to deliver sexual health services, protect reproductive rights, or uphold gender justice. Reproductive justice, she insisted, must be rooted in accessibility for all regardless of one's gender identity, health status, or economic position.

She then critiqued the prioritization of national sovereignty over human rights. In many countries, state policies favour privatized healthcare systems that burden women, especially those in the Global South who disproportionately carry the burden of unacknowledged and unpaid labour.

Manisha also dissected the sociocultural institution of marriage, particularly in relation to reproductive control. She observed that marriage is often promoted as a simple and stable solution, especially by religious institutions and governments concerned with falling birth rates. They are demanding their rights including the right to make their own reproductive choices even at the cost of their relationships with their parents who fail to understand and accept when their children disobey and do not follow traditions.

Manisha addressed the future of reproductive rights in an age of technological advancement. She reflected on the implications of medical procedures like hysterectomies, robotic childbirth, and even the possibility of sexual relationships with machines.

She closed by addressing the deeply patriarchal structures that underpin our societies, the family. Manisha called the patriarchal family "the smallest unit of fascism," pointing out how caste, sub-caste, and cultural indoctrination begin in the home. She urged the creation of stronger, cross-border feminist alliances that can resist these entrenched forces.

Ultimately, Manisha's keynote was a call to action. She reminded us that wars, past and present, are fought not just for land or power, but also over the control of women's bodies.

Plenary Session: Decriminalization and Decolonization
Co-Chairs: Dr. Subatra Jayaraj, Malaysia and Ayesha Bashir, India

This session brought together powerful voices from India, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Rwanda to explore the judicial, cultural, and religious frameworks that shape abortion access across diverse national contexts. The speakers shared deeply rooted challenges within their respective legal and health systems and offered bold visions for change driven by feminist, human rights-based, and culturally contextualized approaches.

Anima Anjuri, Centre for Health Equity, from India, opened the session with a rather harrowing analysis of how the Indian judicial system functions as a barrier to rather than a facilitator of abortion access. Drawing on research from her organization, She Health, she detailed how hundreds of women seeking termination beyond the legal gestational limits are forced to petition the courts. Anima called for urgent reforms that would eliminate the need for court permission entirely and establish clear, standardized protocols that respect bodily autonomy.

Purevsuren Ganzul, Women for Change, Mongolia, offered a perspective shaped by recent legislative change but lingering barriers. Though Mongolia decriminalized abortion in 2019, access remains uneven, particularly for young people and those outside urban centres. Advocacy is ongoing to reduce administrative roadblocks and expand equitable access, especially for marginalized communities.

Nilupuli Nayanthara, YANSL, Sri Lanka, ASAP's Country Advocacy Network in Sri Lanka, provided a historical lens on the evolution of abortion law in her country. She traced the roots of criminalization to British colonial rule in 1883, which banned abortion except to save the life of the pregnant woman. Nilupuli urged for renewed political courage, expanded public discourse, and inclusive legislative processes that centre the experiences of those most affected.

Aishath Enas Abdul Shakoor, SARYN, Maldives, delved into the intersection of religious jurisprudence and reproductive rights. She explained how recent religious rulings, such as fatwas have shifted the legal grounds for abortion. She advocated for increased investment in domestic health infrastructure, training for healthcare providers, and large-scale public education campaigns to reduce stigma and correct misinformation.

Anagonou Akpedje Olivia, ODAS, Rwanda, spoke in the context of Rwanda and the broader Great Lakes region of Africa, and she focused on abortion access in the context of conflict and sexual violence. Drawing on 2023 data from the Democratic Republic of the Congo's Kivu region, she reported over 25,000 cases of sexual violence documented by MSI. She also called for stronger collaboration among organizations, better resource allocation in conflict settings, and the integration of international legal standards into national practice.

Throughout the session, a common thread emerged: the existence of legal provisions does not guarantee access. Whether it is the judiciary in India, the private healthcare system in Mongolia, political inertia in Sri Lanka, religious stigma in the Maldives, or systemic collapse in conflict zones like the DRC, the barriers are multifaceted and deeply embedded. Most importantly, it also demands that we centre the voices of those most affected, such as young people, survivors of violence, queer and disabled individuals, and those living in rural or underserved areas in our advocacy and work for expanding access to SRHR and safe abortion rights.





Plenary Session: Big Picture Politics
Co-Chairs: Co-Chairs: Ignatia Alfa Gloria, Indonesia and Sumit Pawar, India

This thought-provoking session spotlighted the urgent need to centre queer, trans, and marginalized voices in the global struggle for safe abortion rights. Drawing on lived experiences from across South Asia and the Pacific, as well as grounded expertise in law, medicine, and community organizing, the speakers challenged binary frameworks that continue to marginalize those who need abortion services but remain invisible to mainstream advocacy.

Saint-Saëns Aşli, Jamaica, opened the session by directly addressing the disconnect between abortion rights movements and trans and non-binary communities. He pointed to a prevailing but false dichotomy that frames transgender rights and abortion rights as separate spheres. Saint called for a reframing of the conversation, one that embraces intersectionality as the key to understanding and addressing reproductive injustice.

Nandini Mazumder, Assistant Coordinator, ASAP, spoke about the specific barriers trans men face in accessing abortion and reproductive healthcare. These barriers are not simply medical or legal; they are cultural, linguistic, and deeply embedded in systems of power. Nandini emphasized that the medical system, steeped in patriarchy, must be radically transformed not just reformed to become truly inclusive.

Parina Subba Limbu, Drishti, Nepal, shifted the conversation toward adolescents and their reproductive rights, noting that conversations about consent and bodily autonomy are still taboo in many communities. Young people, especially those who are unmarried, queer, or living with HIV, are systematically excluded from sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) services. She underscored that decolonizing the SRHR movement requires actively bringing in voices from the margins, including those living with addictions, mental health conditions, or criminal records.

Dean Vainetutai Tangata, Cook Islands Family Welfare Association, Cook Islands, offered a sobering account of abortion rights in the Cook Islands, where a deeply conservative religious landscape has shaped legal frameworks in damaging ways. With a population of just over 15,000, abortion is permitted only to save the life of the mother and requires approval from three doctors. Dean stressed that in nations trying to frame themselves as "Christian states," the convergence of church and state becomes a formidable obstacle to human rights.

Apurva Vivek, Hashiya Socio-Legal Centre for Women, India, then took the conversation into an often-overlooked space, such as prisons. She powerfully asserted that the answer to whether women in custody have access to abortion is a straightforward "no." For incarcerated people, the idea of reproductive choice is nearly unimaginable. She urged everyone in the reproductive justice space to actively include women in custody within their frameworks, warning that ignoring these populations only reinforces existing hierarchies.

A recurring theme throughout the session was the harm caused by binary language and heteronormative assumptions in both policy and practice. There was a strong call to update educational curricula, media narratives, and legal frameworks to reflect the fluid and diverse realities of human identity. Reproductive justice is not just about access to abortion, but about dignity, recognition, and the right to live and make decisions free from violence or erasure.

The Q&A segment brought forward equally pressing concerns. Participants spoke about how to make SRHR policies more inclusive of homeless women, women living with HIV, and those navigating the criminal justice system. One poignant comment reminded the audience that “there is no such thing as a single-issue struggle, because we do not live single-issue lives.” Whether it's poverty, caste, gender, disability, or queerness, each aspect intersects and must be addressed in our movements.



Lunch workshops: These were a few fun sessions offered on Day 2 and 3 around lunch time for participants to immerse in activity-based learning and here are the highlights:



1. **Hands-on MVA Demo by Dr. Subatra Jayaraj:** Dr Subatra Jayaraj, Chairperson of ASAP and a service provider, conducted a very interesting session on a MVA (Manual Vacuum Aspiration) demo. Participants were extremely thrilled to be a part of this and most of them reiterated how the session helped them understand the technology better and debunked the negative myths they were told about the methods for an abortion.
2. **Learning self-care in times of crisis by Dr Suchitra Dalvie:** Dr Dalvie addressed a much-needed gap in our advocacy world and that of preserving ourselves by caring for us particularly in these challenging times. She reminded participants that caring for ourselves was also a political act as it would enable us to show up better for the work we do. Participants joined in and the overwhelming response was that such sessions are needed urgently for everyone who is a part of this work that demands so much of our time, energy, resources and other sacrifices.
3. **The Flabby Breasted Virgin and Other sordid Tales, an interactive film show, facilitated by Nandini Mazumder:** Nandini showed a clip from the film ASAP developed with theatre practitioner and teacher, Ayesha Susan Thomas and her group, KathaSiyah. The film is called, The Flabby Breasted Virgin and other sordid tales and based on an article that Dr. Dalvie wrote on navigating patriarchy in medicine as a feminist gynaecologist. The film sparked interesting conversations and participants shared their thoughts on experiences of lived realities of sexism and gender discrimination they face/d in general and sexism in medicine and medical gaslighting that female bodied people face rampantly.

Session: Inclusion and Alliances, Break Out Rooms (2 to 3 PM)

Break Out Room 1: Co- chairs: Mahak Agrawal, India and Mai Doan Thuy, Vietnam

The session explored the diverse forms of inclusion and alliance-building that are critical to advancing access to safe abortion and reproductive health. Bringing together speakers from Australia, Nepal, Pakistan, and Fiji, the session underscored how grassroots leadership, community engagement, creative expression, and intersectional feminist strategies can transform systemic barriers and build sustainable reproductive justice movements.

Daile Kelleher, Family Planning Alliance, Australia, shared her experiences through the Churchill Fellowship 2024, and presented the insights from her visits to several countries where she observed both shared and unique challenges in abortion access. In Australia's Queensland region, although abortion was decriminalized in 2018, Daile pointed out that significant gaps in accessibility remain. Daile concluded with practical, audience-specific recommendations for governments, health services, organizations, professionals, and individuals, emphasizing the need for a robust reproductive justice framework to guide policy and practice.

Asika Ghemosu of YSERHA, Nepal, ASAP's Country Advocacy Network in Nepal, presented on bridging systemic gaps in reproductive justice through grassroots leadership. Her presentation painted a clear picture of adolescent SRHR challenges in Nepal, particularly the widespread lack of awareness among youth. She called for specialized, youth-focused SRHR programs that go beyond inclusion to centre young people's priorities as foundational to system change.

Fatima Yaseen, Institute for Social and Youth Development-ISYD, Pakistan, and an alumnus of ASAP Academy, brought a dynamic and creative lens to the conversation through her presentation titled "Khushali ki Dastak: A Step Towards Transformed Choices and a Healthier Future." She highlighted the alarming reproductive health statistics in Pakistan where 11,000 maternal deaths occur annually and 66 abortions per 1,000 women. The direness of the situation is even more evident in the context of the population where more than 60% of the people resides in rural areas with little access to care. Fatima closed by reflecting on the power of art not just as advocacy, but as education, healing, and transformation.

Vivania Tatawaqa, DIVA, Fiji, spoke about the realities of accessing safe abortion in a deeply patriarchal and religiously conservative context. Framing her talk through an intersectional feminist and rights-based lens, Vivan discussed how recent changes in Fiji's abortion laws, specifically, increased restrictions introduced in 2023 have made access more difficult for marginalized communities. Vivan closed by tying reproductive injustice to broader struggles against unpaid labour, violence, and patriarchal control.

Throughout the session, a common thread emerged: sustainable reproductive justice requires work at all levels, from policy advocacy to art and community engagement, from youth involvement to trans-inclusive programming. The speakers collectively demonstrated that progress cannot be measured solely by laws or funding, but by the actual lived realities of those navigating oppressive systems.

Breakout Room 2 (2 to 3 PM): Co-Chairs: Shreejana Bajracharya, Nepal and Nikki Agarwal, India

This breakout session brought together discussions at the intersection of climate change, reproductive justice, and access to safe abortion in Pakistan. By drawing attention to how ecological degradation and climate-induced crises intensify gender inequalities, the speakers introduced a vital and often overlooked dimension of sustainable development.

The session began by framing reproductive justice as a broader framework than reproductive rights alone. It encompasses not only the legal ability to access abortion and reproductive healthcare, but also the systemic social, economic, and political inequalities that prevent marginalized groups, especially women in rural and under-resourced areas—from exercising those rights.

Sani Samson, Eco- citizen, Pakistan, and an alumnus of ASAP Academy, presented on climate change and reproductive health and how they are intrinsically linked, particularly for communities in regions like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In these areas, traditional gender norms and socioeconomic limitations prevent women from prioritizing their health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Gender-based violence, mental health challenges, and climate-related trauma all coalesce to undermine women's autonomy and well-being.

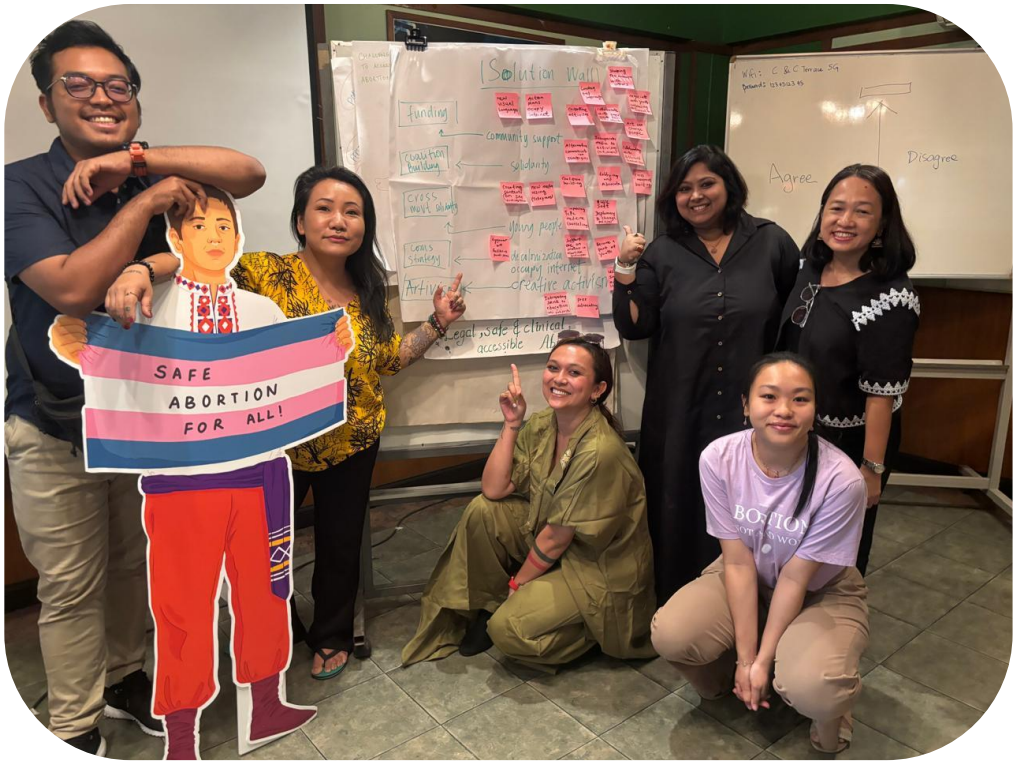
To address these intertwined crises, an intersectional initiative by Eco Citizen was adapted with the support of British Council Pakistan, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. This project focused on safe abortion access, economic empowerment, and building climate resilience, and was an example of community-centred strategies that are actually effective.

Subhangani Jain from The YP Foundation presented the role of communication and media advocacy in shaping public discourse around abortion. She introduced a toolkit developed in collaboration with Feminism in India, and was designed for media and communication professionals. The toolkit addresses this gap by offering editorial support, examples of inclusive tone and vocabulary, and strategies for tackling abortion-related stigma in both print and digital spaces.

Sabuj Miah, YouthAID, Bangladesh, ASAP's Country Advocacy Network, couldn't attend in person due to visa issues (which some of our other participants also faced) but a film he co-developed with the team, Law and Life: A Short Film, was presented for the participants. The film was based on lived realities of many women from marginalized women in Bangladesh who need access to safe abortions but have several hurdles to cross and even then, they may not get access.

Yunishaa Loga, RRAAM, Malaysia, shared about the work that the Reproductive Rights Advocacy Alliance does in Malaysia and particularly emphasised the role of the hotlines. In Malaysia access remains limited and restricted and, in this context, activist run hotlines that are operated over telephones, can be life-saving. They provide critical support to many people calling to look for support with an unwanted pregnancy and here at the hotline they can share their situation, get emotional support in the form of counselling and get referrals to access to safe abortion services while maintaining confidentiality and dignity of the caller.

The session as a whole brought into sharp focus the need for integrated approaches that combine advocacy, communication, legal reform, and climate adaptation strategies. When safe abortion is viewed not in isolation, but as part of a larger ecosystem of justice, equality, and sustainability, new possibilities for meaningful change emerge.





Session: Movement Building, Break Out Rooms (3 to 4 PM)

Break Out Room 1: Co- chairs: Manjari Shreshtha, Nepal and Joshua Dilawar, Pakistan

This breakout session powerfully captured the diverse and evolving strategies being employed to protect and advance access to safe abortion worldwide. It brought together speakers from different

regions who each presented a unique lens—ranging from frontline activism and media engagement to climate resilience and creative arts.

Beniel Ulrich Agossu, ODAS, began the session with a passionate call to action on behalf of abortion service providers and rights defenders, who continue to face discrimination, stigma, legal threats, and violence in many parts of the world. His presentation highlighted the growing global attacks against those who defend the right to abortion, often under the pretext of morality or national law. He outlined four key principles essential for this recognition: preventing harm, enabling the exercise of rights, safeguarding the right to defend rights, and redressing the harm done to those targeted.

Shobha Shukla, CNS, Global, presented the "SHE & Rights" initiative, a campaign focused on deepening media engagement around sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), especially abortion, from a lens of equity and justice. Recognizing that media narratives play a critical role in shaping public opinion and influencing policy, SHE & Rights was launched with the goal of improving understanding and visibility of abortion rights among journalists and civil society organizations in the Global South. The initiative has proven that with the right engagement, media can become a powerful ally in shifting societal attitudes and holding governments accountable for their commitments to gender equality and human rights.

Jedidah Maina, TICAH, Africa, shared insights from a collaborative research effort between the MAMA Network and academic institutions, exploring grassroots feminist organizing for abortion access across sub-Saharan Africa. Her presentation, titled "Even in Our Fear, We Wanted to Do This," revealed how feminist movements have developed in the face of deeply entrenched barriers, many of which are legacies of colonial legal systems. Jade emphasized how these efforts not only provide lifesaving services but also challenge dominant narratives and reclaim agency in a system that continues to criminalize and marginalize abortion seekers.

Manjiri Shrestha, YSERHA, Nepal, presented on climate change and SRHR in Nepal, underscoring the urgent need for intersectional analysis and action. Climate adversity in Nepal has increased in recent years, marked by more frequent natural disasters, disrupted agriculture, rising temperatures, and displacement. The message is clear: climate change is not just an environmental issue but it is a reproductive justice issue.

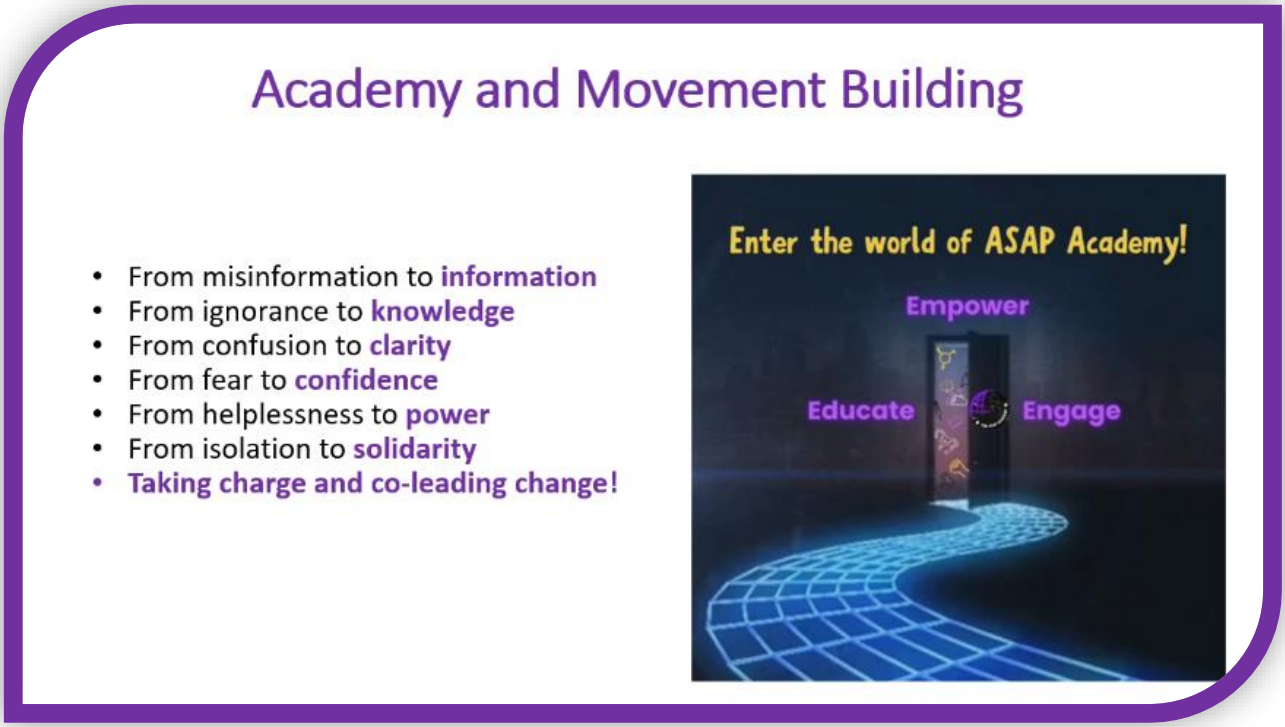
Joshua Dilawar, PAN, Pakistan, shared a deeply moving reflection on the power of theatre as a tool for reproductive health advocacy, especially in remote and conservative regions. His work uses storytelling, performance, and community engagement to provoke thought, challenge stigma, and build empathy. Joshua's work stood as a testament to the importance of creative expression in reshaping societal narratives and forging solidarity across identities.

During the Q&A session, audience members asked about the scripts used in theatre advocacy, government initiatives on climate resilience, and the next steps for protecting abortion rights defenders. These questions reflected the growing awareness that while advocacy takes many forms, legal, artistic, digital, or grassroots, and all are interconnected and essential to building a more just and inclusive world.

Plenary Session: The Future of Movement Building

Co-Chairs: Manisha Gupte, India and Dr. Suchitra Dalvie, India

This session was facilitated by Nandini and Mahak from ASAP. Mahak highlighted the importance of the Academy for building strong foundations for an effective safe abortion rights movement and Nandini reflected on Movement Building itself.



This was followed by a few of our Alumni sharing their experience of the ASAP Academy and presenters were **Mark from Kenya, Tamara from Cook Islands, Thant from Myanmar-Thailand and Ika Ayu from Indonesia.**

They all shared from their contexts and it was a very heartfelt sharing that highlighted the role of the Academy in strengthening the efforts of people working to expand and strengthen safe abortion rights.

It could be someone working in international NGO like MSI where Mark works currently and many staff members join without any prior experience of SRHR, or it could be to support frontline healthcare workers such as Thant who are also navigating oppressive regimes in their home-countries.

Tamara shared how the Academy helped her understand the nuances of safe abortion politics and why it remains so contentious still. She expressed her desire to continue with the Academy and join the advanced course as she had completed the foundation course and felt it has benefited her greatly.

Ika echoed the others but also added how ASAP has been a long-standing ally and part of her journey right from her early days when she helped set up a helpline for safe abortions in Indonesia. ASAP has contributed to her knowledge greatly and strengthened her voice as an advocate.

The reflections also reiterated that the Academy had already created a deep impact within a very short time since it was launched, and reminded us the importance of rare such spaces for knowledge building and fostering solidarities towards a stronger and inclusive safe abortion rights movement.





Day 3 – Sunday, 23rd February 2025
Opening Session Keynote by Dr. Suchitra Dalvie **Title: *To Go Where No Humans Have Gone Before***

Dr. Dalvie opened the convening with a provocative keynote address titled “To Go Where No Humans Have Gone Before”, exploring the rapidly evolving intersection of technology, human identity, and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

She began by introducing the concept of cyborgs or humans who integrate technology into their biological selves to enhance or alter perception and ability. A compelling example was artist Neil Harbison, who perceives colour through sound thanks to an antenna implanted in his skull. These

changes, once the stuff of science fiction, are already a part of present-day life and pose urgent questions about bodily autonomy and consent in an increasingly digitized world.

The conversation expanded into the realm of artificial intelligence and robotics, particularly as they relate to intimacy and sexuality. She described advancements like 3D self-printed robots and the potential for identity theft within this space, pointing out that technology, while fascinating, brings serious vulnerabilities. This growing industry, she noted, is driven by companies such as Abyss Creations, which produce highly sophisticated "real doll" bodies.

She emphasized that the implications of such advancements are being seriously examined in academic and scientific circles. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Love and Sex with Robots Conference, which hosts discussions on topics ranging from ethics and pleasure to future regulation. She pointed to procedures like Barbie labiaplasty, a cosmetic modification of the vulva, as an example of how societal standards and surgical technologies increasingly converge to redefine the body and its purpose.

The keynote concluded by imagining a near future in which even dream communication becomes a shared experience, and humans communicate beyond the physical through neural interfaces. Science fiction's long-standing themes of man-machine integration are becoming more plausible every day. Dalvie posed a central question: are we truly ready for the confluence of SRHR and transhumanism?

Plenary Session: Shaping Safer Online Spaces
Co- Chairs: Na Young, South Kora and Angela Dawson, Australia

The first plenary session on Day 3 brought together key voices from Vietnam, India, Uganda, and the broader global reproductive justice community to examine the critical intersections between technology, safe abortion, and digital safety. As more people turn to the internet for health information, the session explored whether digital platforms are a solution or a problem—and how they can be reimagined as safer, more inclusive spaces.

Mai Thuy, VYAC, Vietnam, opened the discussion with a compelling presentation titled "Using Digital Platforms for Safe Abortion Access in Vietnam: A Solution or a Problem?" She began by outlining the cultural barriers that young people face in accessing sexual health information in Vietnam. Many parents avoid conversations about sex with their children, leaving young people to seek answers online. Despite these challenges, Thuy highlighted the emergence of an online library where abortion is openly discussed, and noted the adaptation of the Women on Web model in Vietnam as a vital digital support structure.

However, she emphasized that while digital platforms hold potential, the landscape is complicated. Many people are forced to rely on underground markets for abortion pills due to legal and logistical restrictions. Despite the obstacles, technology can and should be used to expand safe access, provided it is grounded in rights-based frameworks and ethical use.

Purnima Singh, IPPF SARO, India, a social media officer with the organization presented on her work combating online censorship of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) content. She shared the challenges faced while running #UncensorHealth, a digital campaign aimed at improving access to SRHR information. She also spoke about the backlash SRHR influencers—particularly women and gender minorities—face online, ranging from misogynistic trolling to threats.

Despite the hurdles, Purnima shared creative strategies to navigate censorship, such as altering spellings, using storytelling and satire, and building cross-movement solidarity. She emphasized that

the next step is not only to adapt to censorship but to actively resist it through advocacy, collaborative organizing, and alternate community strategies that protect activists and uphold digital rights.

Ayesha Bashir, Communications and Networking Manager, ASAP, delivered a powerful talk on the initiative led by ASAP called, Shaping Safer Online Spaces (SSOS). She invited the audience to reflect on their daily interactions with technology and asked common questions about phone security which quickly revealed that one of the greatest threats to digital safety is trolling, especially targeted at those working in feminist and SRHR spaces.

Ayesha warned that AI bots have already become active social media users, further complicating the online environment. She pointed to the role of major tech companies in global injustices, highlighting Google's role in facilitating propaganda during the Palestine conflict and noting that even in democratic countries, the freedom of speech is under threat. Digital platforms, she suggested, can play a transformative role in this integration, but only if they are developed and deployed with care, equity, and inclusion in mind.

The session concluded with a resounding call for collective responsibility in shaping safer online spaces. We all agreed that we live in a world where information is both weaponized and withheld, the internet is a powerful medium in the global movement for safe abortion and reproductive justice.





Plenary Session: Creating the future, we want – A Panel discussion
Co-Chairs: Dr. Subatra Jayaraj, Malaysia and Dr. Suchitra Dalvie, India

The final plenary session of Day 3 brought together a powerful chorus of voices reflecting on the collective struggles and shared commitments of reproductive justice advocates across the Global South.

The session opened with a powerful presentation on South-South collaboration and leadership by **Nandini**, which emphasized the shared legacies of colonialism and the continuing global inequalities that shape access to reproductive rights. She situated reproductive justice within the post-colonial reality of the Global South, stressing that these regions often face parallel struggles that require shared strategies and mutual solidarity. She framed reproductive justice as an inherently political and intersectional movement, deeply linked with other allied and non-allied movements including for LGBTQ+ rights, decriminalization of sex work, and many others rights struggles.

This was followed by a deeply moving reflection from **Thant,** who spoke about the resistance efforts unfolding in the restrictive environments of Myanmar and Afghanistan. His remarks centered on the courage and resilience of those advocating for human and reproductive rights in contexts where even basic freedoms are denied. Thant's reflections reminded the audience that even in the darkest times, there are people who persist in fighting for justice.

Next, **Dean** brought the conversation into the realm of digital organizing with a presentation on building stronger solidarities toward radical change. They invited the audience to think beyond formal convenings and to nurture coalitions through intentional digital action. Dean's message was a gentle

reminder for those in the reproductive rights space to use all tools available to foster solidarity, build collectives of care, hold space and amplify each other's voices.

In a reflective presentation titled "Knowledge is Power," **Vivek**, from ISAY shared a personal journey of transformation through learning, particularly through engagement with the ISAYs platform. She described how her understanding of reproductive health and justice evolved from one of limited awareness to an intersectional, critical lens. The speaker framed knowledge as a lifelong journey that requires engaging, educating, and ultimately empowering the next generation of change-makers.

The session concluded with a deeply emotional sharing from **Puku**, from DYISA who expressed gratitude for the spaces created through ASAP and DYSA, calling them informal but vital support networks. In the absence of robust local support, such networks become lifelines. She credited these communities with giving her strength, reminding everyone that activism, though often isolating, is rarely carried out alone.

In the closing remarks of the session, we remembered Dr. Subatra's statement: "We fight against fascism because we love our world too much." This reminded us bell hooks who reminded us of the importance of love when she said, "I don't trust any revolution where there is no love".

We closed by expressing our gratitude to all participants, including those unable to attend due to visa challenges. Acknowledgments were made to Manisha Gupte, ASAP Academy lead trainer and a long-term supporter of our work, the Steering Committee (SC) members, Dr. The 1st Academy Convening closed on a note of collective strength, resilience, renewed commitment to reproductive justice and to continuing to fight for safe abortion rights until we realise ASAP's vision to create a world where no one dies of an unsafe abortion.




DECOLONIZE!


DECOLONIZE!


COLLECT YOUR WITCH ID AT THE BOOTH
2025

Closing Declaration:

The convening came to an end but we left with the powerful closing declaration that reiterated the importance of the work we are doing to expand and protect safe abortion rights from an intersectional lens. Participants read out a statement and every statement reflected the powerful exchange of ideas and learnings, the solidarities between people and our movements, and the deep love that fuels this work:

Nujhat, YouthAID, Bangladesh: We the participants of the ASAP Academy and the Academy Convening gathered from all around the world, and we may be divided in our contexts but we are united in our feminist fight and committed to take forward the safe abortion rights movement. We are going to read out the closing declaration and share our collective reflections, hopes and dreams and plans ahead.

Puku, DYISA, Bhutan: In today's world, digital tools are not just a means of access but a battleground where narratives are shaped. The ASAP Academy stands as a testament to the power of online spaces in reclaiming the discourse on safe abortion, ensuring that knowledge and learning are not dictated by oppressive forces but by those most impacted. However, data poverty hinders development. By bridging the digital divide and allocating adequate resources, we ensure that education and services remain within reach, reinforcing our right to self-determination.

Mark, MSI, Kenya: Remember KNOWLEDGE IS POWER. Education, then, becomes a useful method of empowerment that should not be overlooked. The ASAP Academy is more than just a learning space; it is a radical act of resistance—an assertion that those in the Global South and the majority world will not only lead this movement but will define its future. We are here to shape the narrative, not be shaped by it.

Parina, Drishti, Nepal: The challenges ahead of us may be daunting but we remain determined and committed to our struggles. We will continue our work till everyone has access to safe abortion rights and human rights in general are protected for all.

Ganzul, Young Women for Change, Mongolia: We acknowledge the tireless work of grassroots activists, community health workers, and advocates who continue to push boundaries and challenge unjust laws that restrict bodily autonomy in their local contexts and negotiating with immediate challenges, backlash and threats and bringing about transformative change in people's lives, communities and the world.

Thant, Myanmar-Thailand: We acknowledge our privilege to be here in-person at the Academy Convening and stand in solidarity with those who couldn't attend in person due to various reasons such as border control and geo-politics, economic constraints, and most importantly conflict and the genocide going on in many of our countries around the world due to home-grown and foreign oppressors.

Thant, Myanmar-Thailand: We stand in solidarity with the people of Afghanistan, Iran, Kashmir, Lebanon, Myanmar, Palestine, Sudan and countless other countries and communities who are under attack, facing extreme violence, suffering grave injustices, losing homes, lives and loved ones by neo-fascist, neo-colonial, and neo-imperialist forces.

Aastha, Nepal: We recognize that the systems of oppression aren't isolated and the attacks are against every value we fight for - from the right to self-determination to the right over our own bodies, the right to make choices for our lives, the right to safe abortions, right to gender-inclusive healthcare,

among others. Therefore, we pledge to build inclusive safe abortion rights movements in solidarity with other allied and non-allied SRHR and social justice movements.

Zarghoona Wadood, PAN, Pakistan: To this end, we stand in solidarity with intersectional communities and intersectional causes and identities. Hereby, we reaffirm our commitment to building a coalition that centres accessibility, and inclusion with the goal of building an anti-colonial movement across the world, with united and amplified power vested in holistic justice.

Puku, DIYSA, Bhutan: The right to safe abortions was always a contentious issue but today we are witnessing an escalated attack against it in countries around the world. We recognize that safe abortion is not just a health issue but a fundamental issue of human rights, social justice, economic equality, autonomy, agency and dignity. We will continue to demand for safe abortions to be decriminalized, destigmatized, and made accessible to all those who need it. (and access includes availability, costs, sensitivity, etc.). Because the time for safe abortion rights is NOW!

Saint, Jamaica: History has shown us that imperialism and colonialism have fallen before, and so will neo-imperialism and neo-colonialism. The South is rising, and we will define our own futures, free from oppressive systems that seek to control our bodies, desires, decisions, choices.

Saint, Jamaica: Our revolution will have room for joy even as we give space to our grief, our resistance will be our honest, unabashed and unashamed existence, our resistance will be a celebration even as we rage, our resistance will be our love even as those in status-quo unleash hate upon us. Our resistance will be our collectivization against their attempts to divide and rule over us. And our resistance will win!

Enas, Maldives: We promise to take a pause and rest but never stop and give up until we have achieved our goal of a world forced divisions between us versus them, without violence, surveillance, censorship and other weapons for controlling us, without hierarchies where a few people on the top continue to oppress the vast majority below, without cis-heteronormativity being the default and where all people can live freely, and where no one will be harmed due to or die of unsafe abortions.

Dean, Cook Islands: The Academy and the Convening has given us the knowledge and the right framework to be vocal and reiterate our rights and particularly safe abortion rights, to act now and build solidarities towards a stronger inclusive safe abortion rights movement and collectively build a world where no one has to die of an unsafe abortion. Remember by demanding safe abortion rights we are taking back control of our own bodies and charting our own pathways which is critical because it ensures we not only merely exist but we exist on our own terms.

Dean, Cook Islands: Come join and get other you know to join as in our journey to engage, educate and empower at the ASAP Academy, and let us expand our community of co-conspirators or good trouble makers who are on the right side of history and demand safe abortion rights for all and take charge of our futures!

After the declaration, the 1st Academy Convening was officially closed and yet it was the much-needed catalyst to renew hope, solidarity and passion to continue to work towards a world where everyone has access to safe, inclusive, accessible and respectful abortion services.



~~~~End of Report~~~~