

28 September: Statements, Activities, Tweets

2nd report, 12 October 2018

Here are more 28 September reports. It has been a brilliant year for International Safe Abortion Day!! Congratulations one and all!!

FIDH: WORLDWIDE MOVEMENT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



223 NGOs call on the United Nations to take action in support to the right to abortion

Through the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, States explicitly agreed to prioritize the realization of all women's human rights. From Ireland, to Argentina, to South Korea, to Poland and to the Democratic Republic of Congo, women human rights defenders around the world are taking to the streets, to the courtrooms and to the ballot boxes to reclaim control over their own bodies and lives by demanding access to comprehensive abortion care. We unite in solidarity to recognize the shared roots of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination in our struggles.

States can no longer ignore the scientific evidence, the jurisprudence and the growing consensus among human rights bodies that abortion rights are human rights. The criminalization of abortion and the failure to ensure access to comprehensive abortion care has been found to be a violation of, inter alia, the rights to health, to bodily autonomy, freedom from discrimination, to the benefits of scientific progress, to privacy and to be free from torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment amongst other human rights. In addition, impunity for attacks on abortion rights defenders, including abortion providers, is a clear violation of the principles set forth in the Declaration of Human Rights Defenders... We stand together as abortion rights defenders, allies and supporters from around the world and call on the Council to condemn attacks on abortion rights defenders and to urgently address the human rights violations arising from the denial of comprehensive abortion care

[FULL STATEMENT](#), 28 September 2018 [ES](#) [FA](#) [FR](#)

EUROPE



Manifesto of 343 women: Equal sexual and reproductive rights for all women in Europe

We, 343 European women, stand for a Europe of women's rights and self-determination. Today we pay tribute to the 343 women who published a manifesto in France in Le Nouvel Observateur in 1971 calling for women's sexual and reproductive rights by demanding legal abortions. We do the same today, because Europe is experiencing a backlash on women's rights: Achievements on sexual and reproductive rights since the 1970s are under threat again. We thus call upon all European governments and the European Commission to establish and guarantee conditions that protect and advance women's rights and self-determination...

#343Manifesto #MyBodyMyRights 343manifesto.eu

[FULL STATEMENT AND 343 SIGNATORIES](#), 12 October 2018

ANDORRA



First ever demonstration for decriminalisation of abortion

Maria, who had an abortion at 18, said she was "lucky" her family were able to scrape the cash together... Today, aged 27, she recalls her shock at her Andorran gynaecologist forcing her to listen to the fetal heartbeat, trying to dissuade her from ending the pregnancy. The journey back from Spain took three hours by road, during which she was doubled over with abdominal pain. "You come to our country to buy cigarettes -- we come to your country to buy our rights," reads a slogan on a pro-legalisation poster shared on social media. "It's a form of torture," said Vanessa Mendoza Cortes from the Stop Violence group, which is campaigning for the legalisation of terminations.

On 29 September, the group organised Andorra's first-ever street protest in favour of decriminalising abortion. The march took place in the old city of Andorra, where demonstrators called: « The rights of man are also the rights of women», One of the demonstrators called on French President Macron, who will be visiting Andorra, to speak out against this prehistoric mentality.

SOURCES: [Le Monde](#), 29 September 2018 ; [France24](#), 28 September 2018

HAITI



March in support of the legalisation of abortion

On 26 September, dozens of people, mostly women, marched through the streets of Port-au-Prince, calling for the legalisation of abortion and access to contraception in Haiti. They are working to sensitise both the authorities and the population to the fact that illegal, unsafe abortion is a cause of death, serious complications and infertility in women, and to avoid being criminally punished, women are forced to abort in secret, often in very bad conditions. They called on the Parliament to legalise abortion so that women can control their pregnancies, plan their lives and have access to good health services. They condemned the irresponsibility of the State in permitting such poor health care in Haiti. The maternity hospital must not be a cemetery for women, they said.

SOURCE: [Alterpresse](#), 28 September 2018

ECUADOR



The green scarf movement for free abortion is growing in Ecuador

The many collectives of women's rights defenders and many other people have demonstrated in Quito on 28 September to demand free abortion in Ecuador. From 5pm onwards, a wave of green turned into a tide in front of the Attorney General's office to begin the march to the Carondelet Palace. With a sense of joy, girls, young women and adults prepared posters, painted their faces, and put on the green scarves that have become the symbol of the global struggle for abortion. And then they marched.

SOURCE: [Pressenza](#) + [ES](#), 1 October 2018 [MANY GREAT PHOTOS]

BOLIVIA



PHOTO: Argentina, 31 May 2018

Bolivia mobilises for the right to abortion on 28 September

Every year in Bolivia, 60,000-80,000 women have an illegal abortion, and clandestine abortions are the third cause of maternal deaths. Even though abortion for rape or risk to the woman's health has been permitted since 2014, there are 200 illegal abortions each day, and only 332 legal abortions. "I had an abortion without any anaesthesia," said Esther, 26, "and I do not wish this pain on anyone. How could I expose myself to such a dangerous situation and put my life on the line? Because I had no money and no information." That is why today, in La Paz, meetings are being held calling for the decriminalisation and legalisation of abortion. So that women can take control of their bodies, but especially to stop dying.

SOURCE: [rfi](#), 28 September 2018 ;

COHERINET UGANDA



Aunt Kaki launch group



Trained counsellors and trainers



Community dialogue

Launch of Aunt Kaki Helpline and community dialogue

With financial support from the Safe Abortion Action Fund (SAAF), the Aunt KAKI helpline was launched on 28 September. Building from the Ugandan cultural background of an Aunt who is well-versed in basic sexual reproduction health information, Aunt KAKI is a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week toll free helpline. We are aiming to increase the availability of life-saving sexual and reproductive health information for women of reproductive age, including but not limited to safe abortion, and referrals for information on a safe, equitable, pleasurable sexual life and counselling for priority and key affected populations from the grassroots level in Uganda – in English, Luganda, Runyankole, Luo and Swahili – to enable people to act in their own best interests.

LONDON UK



Festival of Choice: Abortion stories workshop to share experiences

This was a community-building workshop for those people who have experienced abortion to share their experiences in a small, small group, using drawing, painting, collaging or writing to visualise experiences and open up discussion about feelings experienced during and after the abortion, forging networks of solidarity and sharing examples of empowerment & control over our bodies and choice. A collaborative, visual archive of the participants' stories will take the form of a DIY fanzine, which will be hand-bound and kept by each participant. The workshop was part of the Festival of Choice 2018, bringing together feminist & human rights organisations, collectives and independent activists from a range of countries, who live or are studying in London.

BURUNDI



On the occasion of International Safe Abortion Day, the SOS Women in Need Network (SOS EDF) organised a brainstorming workshop on the ways of achieving access for women and girls to safe abortion services. The objective of the workshop was to analyse abortion laws and obstacles in Burundi in order to advocate and sensitise both national and local opinion on the need of Burundian women for safe, legal abortion services.

FOLLOW EVENTS AT: <http://sosfed.org/urgence/> ; [PHOTO GALLERY](#)

GERMANY



Germany: Where providing information on abortion remains a crime

Abortion is anything but simple in Germany. Just providing information about the procedure can lead to criminal charges, with several doctors charged in the past few months. Abortion is only legal under certain circumstances, leading to high tensions within the medical community. Fewer and fewer doctors are providing abortions and the subject remains taboo. Last weekend both pro-choice and anti-abortion activists took to the streets of Berlin. This video, by Patrick Lovett and Emerald Maxwell, reports on the legal situation and the opposing demonstrations:

[France 24 News](#), 24 September 2018

MALAWI



Women are dying from backstreet abortions. But reforms to Malawi's 157-year-old laws are stuck

David M holds the voter registration card of his late wife, Selina. The last time he saw her, she had just found out she was pregnant with their fourth child. "She told me she was feeling symptoms of pregnancy. She left for her home village two days later to visit her parents," the 36-year-old father said, standing in the doorway of their thatched-roof village home, his daughters playing in the dirt yard outside. "I was later told that she went to a traditional healer to seek abortion-induced drugs which killed her." A healer, who asked not to be identified for fear of being arrested, said he has been providing abortion services to women since he started his trade a decade ago. "I assist these women because they are currently desperate," he said, adding that doing so is against the constitution of the International Traditional Medicine Council of Malawi, a group of accredited traditional healers of which he is member. He gives the women a concoction of what he calls "abortion-inducing" herbs. "But still I advise my clients to immediately seek medical help if they notice any serious complications," he explains. Chisale Mhango an obstetrician at Malawi's largest referral health facility, Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital, says he receives between 20 and 30 patients with post-abortion complications every day.

SOURCE: [CNN](#), by Lameck Masina, 25 September 2018

KENYA



Pinned Tweet

 **Aunt Jane Hotline** @YourAuntJane · Sep 27

Nearly 500,000 women will get unsafe abortions EVERY YEAR in Kenya—a leading cause of maternal harm and death. Should the government take action and make abortion safe and legal?

93% YES

6% NO

1% NOT SURE

198 votes • Final results

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO



We organised a march of 40 activists from five feminist organisations, including the Foundation for Family Solidarity (FOSOF); Debout Fille; Group of Women Living with HIV (GFV-HIV); SOJFEP, and SOS Sexuality this morning in the streets of Baraka, Fizi, South Kivu, in support of International Contraception Day (September 26) and International Safe Abortion Day (September 28). We had two key messages : Universal Access and Let's Break the Stigma. Through our microphones we invited single girls and other unmarried or common-law women to feel free to access family planning centres, and to victims of rape and sexual assault who became pregnant and all women traumatised by an unwanted pregnancy, to come to the clinics for safe abortion services. Stewards were tasked with providing information and answering questions from more than 200 people along the way and to make appointments for anyone who requested them. Among the protesters we noted about 20 young sex workers mobilised by SOS Sexuality, who we are partnering with in the project "Wanted births, a right for all" supported by SAAF / IPPF. National radio and TV, and a reporter from Internews reported the march. We then held a debate in a conference for 100 community leaders, politicians and opinion leaders.

GFV VIH RDC gfvvih.rdc@gmail.com

MOROCCO



Abortion Rights for All Women

Women Decide!!

Alternative Movement for Individual Liberties (M.A.L.I)

GYNUITY HEALTH PROJECTS



Statement by Beverly Winikoff, Gynuity President

Since the approval of Mifeprex® in the United States in 2000, dozens of studies and extensive experience have confirmed the efficacy and safety of mifepristone followed by misoprostol for medical abortion. However, many women who could benefit from mifepristone still do not have access to it. To show our support for today's International Safe Abortion Day, our "Spotlight on..." shines a light on the work of the Coalition to Expand Access to Mifepristone in the US (Mife Coalition), an alliance of 360 individuals representing 150 organizations that stand behind expanded access to safe medical abortion. The Coalition calls for the removal of politically motivated and/or medically unnecessary restrictions on mifepristone. These restrictions do not make medical abortion safer; instead they place a burden on women by creating barriers to access and increasing cost. Removing unnecessary barriers can improve health, reduce stigma, and save lives. Gynuity joins our colleagues around the globe in recognizing International Safe Abortion Day.

BRAZIL



An Abortion Story

This is a story from “My Abortion Story Campaign”. Global Health Strategies developed this animated video, which has just been released by the Campanha Nem Presa Nem Morta (Not One More Death Campaign) as part of the 28 September mobilisation for legalisation of abortion.

[VIDEO](#) With English subtitles TO READ OTHER STORIES, GO TO: myabortionstory.tumblr.com

MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES



Interview with Manisha Kumar

My first experience was in Lesotho, where I was a doctor on the maternity ward of a small hospital in the mountains. One day, an 18-year-old girl came in; in septic shock – her body was fully infected. She was in and out of consciousness with a really high fever. When we examined her, we found sticks and leaves inside her vagina. It was immediately clear, first to the local staff and then to me, that these were complications from an unsafe abortion that she’d tried to provoke at home. We did everything to treat her – intravenous antibiotics, lots of IV fluids. It took days; she finally recovered, I remember sitting at her bedside and thinking this was all so preventable.

Later, on my first assignment with MSF in the Democratic Republic of Congo, I was in charge of the hospital's maternity ward, and I saw women and girls who were just as sick as that girl in Lesotho. But now it was bed after bed after bed, all full with women with complications from unsafe abortions. We were admitting 800 women every year with post-abortion complications at that project. It became clear me that this is something that affects all kinds of women – girls, middle-aged women; married and unmarried; women with many children, women with two children, women with no children. The one thing they all had in common was that they’d each found themselves in a hospital bed because they’d had an unwanted pregnancy and, having no safe way to end the pregnancy, had resorted to unsafe means. It seemed to me that these women were in the shadows. They were being treated by the staff, but no one was really talking about it, and no one seemed to be thinking about how they all got so sick in the first place.

[VIDEO](#) ; [REPORT](#)

SOUTH AFRICA



That was the moment where everything changed

Eddie Mhlanga is the Mpumalanga health department's specialist obstetrician–gynaecologist. He often had to attend to women who had unsafe abortions during apartheid, when abortion was illegal in South Africa. He is one of the authors of the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act. This was his experience of treating a patient who had an illegal abortion. He spoke to Laura López González.

"I had a colleague who went and obtained an illegal abortion. I was the one who admitted her [after the procedure went wrong]. I promised her at 12 midday on Thursday that I would see her at 2 o'clock in theatre. That was the last time I spoke to her because, at half-past one, she collapsed. She had been bleeding heavily and been in a lot of pain. When they called me to come to the theatre, she was already under anaesthetic. I opened her up and found her womb was rotten from the infection.

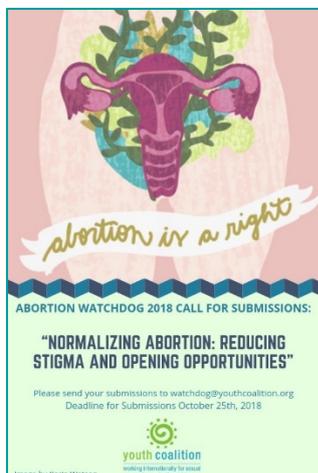
We took that out and sent her to the intensive care unit. Three and a half hours later, her condition had not changed. I took her back to theatre, opened her back up and found out that the infection – the pus – had spread from her pelvis right up to her kidneys. We had to scoop this pus all out. For the next 10 days, she was in the ICU. Every evening, I would go to the ICU and sit by her bedside. I'd hold her hand and pray, "Lord, give her another chance. She is no more a sinner than I am." After 10 days, she died.

The following week, at the funeral, her mother was sitting there with her daughter's four-year-old son. I looked at them and said: "No woman deserves to lose a daughter to unsafe abortion, no child deserves to grow up without a mother."

That was the moment where everything changed.

[Bhekisisa](#), 28 September 2018 ; PHOTO: Bheki Radebe

YOUTH COALITION



Call for Submissions: September 28 Abortion Rights Watchdog

The Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights invites young people under 30 years old to submit original artwork (posters, infographics, pictures, postcards, videos, etc.) and original writing (articles, stories, poetry) on the theme of “Normalizing Abortion: Reducing Stigma and Opening Opportunities” for the 28 September 2018 Abortion Rights Watchdog publication.

The full call for submissions can be found [on our website](#) in English, Spanish, Russian, Arabic.

Send submissions to watchdog@youthcoalition.org by 25 October 2018

INTERNATIONAL PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION



On International Safe Abortion Day IPPF launched a new global campaign on abortion, alongside our report [Her in Charge: Medical abortion and women’s lives – A call for action](#). The campaign runs for six months (ending on International Women’s Day) across more than 34 countries. Participating countries have created their own campaigns according to their contexts. The focus is on stigma, legislation and medical advances. Activities so far range from awareness raising exercise classes in Burkina Faso, to youth group street performances in Nepal, to Twitter takeovers and videos. IPPF calls upon people around the world to stand with women and girls and demand that everyone can decide what happens to their own bodies. We ask people to [#PledgeYourVoice](#) and have a conversation about abortion to help break the stigma and demand reproductive freedom for people everywhere.

UGANDA

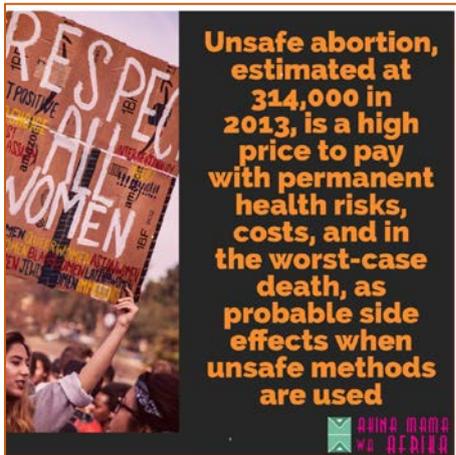


Activists commemorate victims of unsafe abortion

The 2016 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey indicates that 25% of adolescent girls and young women aged 15-19 in Uganda are pregnant or a mother, one of the highest teenage rates in sub-Saharan Africa. In Uganda, teenage pregnancy has drastic and far-reaching health, developmental and economic effects at the individual, family, community and national levels. In Kampala, a network of civil society organizations over the 28 September weekend, joined the rest of world to mark International Safe Abortion Day by lighting candles in memory of thousands of women and girls who have died after undergoing unsafe abortion.

SOURCE: [Daily Monitor](#) + PHOTO, by Anthony Wesaka, 1 October 2018

TWEET FROM AFRICA



Our feminist demand is that abortion should be decriminalised for women & girls to access safe services. We can't have one more woman living in stigma because they were denied a choice. Not another woman should die due to failed unsafe procedures!

Akina Mama Wa Afrika @amwaafrika ; Kenya SRHR Alliance @KenyaSRHR (a consortium of 17 CSOs and institutions working to promote the sexual reproductive health and rights of young people, women and marginalized groups in Kenya); CEHURD Uganda @cehurduganda; Right here Right now @RHRNKenya; Planned Parenthood @PPFA, International Campaign for Women's Right to Safe Abortion @Safe_Abortion; Ministry of Health Uganda @MinofHealthUG; HRAPF @hrapf_uganda; Peer to Peer Uganda @PEERTOPEERUG

POLAND



Multiple activities, many participants

On 30 September, the first March for Safe, Free and Legal Abortion in Warsaw took place, with around 2,000 people. We said: “The most important thing is that every person who needs information, support and help is not alone. #Youarenotalone. There are thousands of us, and abortion means life. We look for information, support each other, borrow money, end unwanted pregnancies. Women's solidarity in the matter of abortion is invisible, but it is huge and moving.”

Abortion – legal, safe, free of charge and, above all, actually available always when it's needed, regardless of the reason a person might have to decide about not continuing their pregnancy. Without shame or fear – these were the demands we marched for in Warsaw. The organisers were: Aborcyjny Dream Team on Tour; Warszawski Strajk Kobiet; Inicjatywa Pracownicza Warszawa; Stowarzyszenie na rzecz Polityki Zdrowotnej Opartej na Nauce Antyfaszystowska Warszawa; Porozumienie Kobiet 8 Marca.

A manual was launched by the Federation for Women & Family Planning called “How to write/talk about abortion”, and a booklet was published with stories and talks from the internet forum of *Kobiety w Sieci*, posted since 2009.



The Federation also commissioned an opinion poll, which showed unprecedented support for the right to terminate pregnancy up to 12 weeks – 69%. 92% were strongly opposed to state interference in reproductive choices. Regarding anti-abortion banners in the public space, especially near schools and hospitals. 83% had a negative opinion and 70% would ban them.

They also organised a conference: “Abortion is part of our lives”, which celebrated the worldwide successes of the pro-choice community from Chile to Ireland to South Korea, opened by Krystyna Kacpura. The leader of the Polish Women's Strike, Marta Lempart, spoke about the cooperation between activists from Poland, Ireland and Argentina. She announced a new campaign “Legal abortion now!”, to find out politicians' views on legal abortion and publicise which MPs, senators and candidates are pro-choice. Natasza Blek from Doctors for Women presented data on doctors' stance on the current anti-abortion law (25% for liberalisation, 8% for abortion on demand). They want to bring together the pro-choice medical community, and hold educational activities by and for doctors. Lawyer Kamila Ferenc enumerated the legal barriers. Only 10% of Polish hospitals provide legal abortions. Activist Aleksandra Knapik talked about effective storytelling and grassroots cooperation on the European level. The crowning moment of the event was the signing of the pro-choice, international [Brussels Declaration](#) by invited politicians, parties, NGOs, informal groups and researchers.

SOURCE: [Federation for Women and Family Planning 28 Sept](#) /Astra Bulletin October 2018 ; + e-mails with other reports. See also: [Kobiety w Sieci](#)

ARMENIA



Roundtable: The state of reproductive health and rights among women

This roundtable, on 28 September, was organised by the Women’s Resource Center Armenia, with representatives from the Ministry of Health, Committee on Health and Social Issues of the National Assembly, National Institute of Healthcare and several local and international NGOs. There was a situation analysis of the legal, normative framework and existing policies. A short [video](#) on woman’s autonomy to make decisions about her own body was presented. The meeting gave grassroots organizations and policy makers space to discuss the issues in the field of reproductive health and rights and develop plans for further steps to make the field more inclusive and sensitive.

SOURCE: [Women's Resource Center, Armenia](#) /Astra Bulletin October 2018

GEORGIA



Reproductive health week: many activities

Association HERA XXI conducted a range of awareness-raising activities on SRHR, including advocacy meetings, workshops with key stakeholders, youth awareness-raising activities and a social media campaign with life stories of women and girls dedicated to World Contraception Day and International Safe Abortion Day. On 26 September, we gave a presentation of “Pilot Assessment on Integration of Family Planning and Youth-Friendly Services in Primary Healthcare”, which ended with recommendations by all key stakeholders – decision makers in primary healthcare, service providers, governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

On 28 September, we held an advocacy meeting on “Reproductive Health and Healthy Lifestyle Education”, intended to support the establishment of a supportive environment towards CSE. Representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science, National Center for Teachers’ Professional Development, school heads, teachers, school doctors, parents and relevant CSOs were actively engaged in discussions. The Campaign continued with youth awareness-raising activities in collaboration with Tbilisi Youth Centers Union, under the Tbilisi Mayor, National Probation Centre and universities. More than 60 students and young people were equipped with age-appropriate information on making informed choices.

SOURCE: [HERA XXI](#) /Astra Bulletin October 2018

MOLDOVA



Reproductive Health Training Center activities

We created a group on Facebook [мы за выбор / sustinem alegerea ta](#) where interested people from Eastern Europe and Central Asia could join and find information about reproductive and sexual health and rights, in both Russian and Romanian. We held a [FB LIVE](#) on contraception methods and published an article inviting people to create an [event](#) on FB. We also developed an [Instagram](#) page and published a [press release](#) online and shared it with the media. RHTC will be also hosting a [2-day regional conference](#) on Safe and Legal Abortion and Post-Abortion Family Planning, on 15-16 November 2018 in Chisinau. Conference participants will represent 12 countries.

SOURCE: [Reproductive Health Training Center](#) /Astra Bulletin October 2018

GHANA



Global Media Foundation Radio Awareness Campaign & Regional Stakeholders Summit

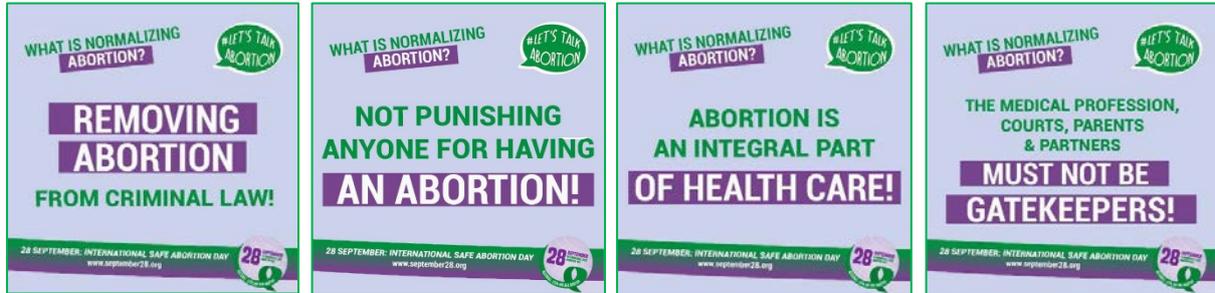
The Radio Awareness Campaign was held in four radio stations, Space FM, Sky FM, Radio BAR and Astar FM, with discussions on access to safe and legal abortion throughout the country and restrictions that violate the sexual and reproductive rights of women. The focus was on stigma surrounding access to abortion and its damaging effects at the individual, community, institutional, legal and mass cultural levels.

The Regional Stakeholder Summit brought together over 180 participants: youth, women, adolescents, media, religious and opinion leaders, with the aim of involving young people to become the front-line defenders of abortion rights in Ghana through advocacy work. The summit discussed challenges facing women who seek for safe abortion services, emergency contraception, family planning counselling and youth-friendly services as well the need for full legalization of abortion to save millions of women's lives. Further discussion covered access to safe, legal abortion throughout the country and restrictions that violate the sexual and reproductive rights of women. Speaker Raphael Godlove Ahenu, Global Media Foundation, called for supportive policies and financial commitments to provide comprehensive sexuality education; a wide range of contraceptive methods, emergency contraception; accurate family planning counselling; and access to safe, legal abortion, all

essential to fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goal of universal access to sexual and reproductive health (Target 3.7).

SOURCE: E-mail, 5 October 2018, and see: [GLOMEF](#)

28 SEPTEMBER POSTERS





International Safe Abortion Day Reports

Do you have a story, publication, video or report of an event, activities/action for 28 September 2018?

Please send a title, ± 200-300 words, group details, several visuals and if possible a weblink to the source, full report, video or website to:

info@safeabortionwomensright.org